

THOUGHTS ON SLAVERY.



"That
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

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THROUGHOUT Christendom, slavery has become the most exciting topic of the day. In our own country, the discussion growing out of it has assumed a highly menacing aspect. It threatens to array one section against another, and to rend the republic by intestine convulsions. The controversy cannot be smothered. It is only by considering the subject calmly, in all its bearings, that measures can be taken with any hope of success to avert the dangers that look so formidable in the distance.

But such an examination, however desirable, would open a wider field than it is contemplated at present to explore. The influence of slavery upon the Federal Government, and its action upon political economy and our social relations, will be passed over in silence. The inquiry will be restricted to the simple question — Whether negro slavery is consistent with the precepts of the Christian religion? Great and good men have repeatedly asserted that it is not. Dr. Channing, whose brilliant eloquence imparts great weight to his sentiments, entertained this opinion. He denies that man can be the subject of property. “The claim of property in a human being,” says the Doctor, “is altogether false and groundless. No such right of man in man can exist. A human being cannot justly be owned.” This is the proposition which we propose to examine and discuss.

In the outset, we are admonished that slavery is not a creature of modern civilization. Its birth is hid in the dusk of ages. Centuries and centuries before Christianity was promulgated, it had attained a height, that has never been surpassed. The first

glimpse of it is seen in the patriarchal tent; and as man has advanced from barbarism to refinement, it has attended him through every stage of his progress. It has traversed continents and survived dynasties, and its roots are now struck deep into the foundations of society over a great portion of the globe. An institution so venerable with years, and so extensively diffused; which has always numbered among its supporters, men renowned for their piety, wisdom, and benevolence, is entitled, in sheer justice, to a fair hearing, before it is utterly condemned.

Fortunately, we are able to trace its origin; although the account of it, from its position in the Bible among such astounding events as the flood, the preservation of mankind, and the renovation of the earth, has failed to attract that attention which its importance demands, and the impression it has made on our minds is weak in proportion. It happened in this manner:

“Noah began to be an husbandman, and planted a vineyard: and he drank of the wine, and was drunken, and was uncovered in his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father: and their face was backward, and they saw not their father’s nakedness. And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done. And he said, Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.” In this brief account, is contained the germ of the whole matter.

Here two important questions arise. Did Noah pronounce this sentence in his private capacity, or as the Vicegerent of God? Was he thirsting for vengeance, and impelled by hatred towards the offender, or did he act by divine authority? They can only be answered by considering the position in which Noah was providentially placed at this time, and the nature and malignancy of the crime.

Notwithstanding this unfortunate breach of decorum Noah is spoken of throughout the Scriptures in terms of the highest respect. He is styled a preacher of righteousness, and heir of the righteousness which is by faith. His name is conspicuously enrolled among the most eminent saints who have lived. At this moment his position was preëminently grand. The friend and favorite of God, he was the father, the priest and the monarch of the human race. All the attributes of sovereignty were concentrated in him. He was the head of the family, the church, and the state. In the exceedingly brief notice of the insult which has been preserved, it is apparent that all the circumstances attending it are not related; and yet enough appears to convince us that it was signally calculated to degrade him in the estimation of his family, constituting the entire human race, and bring him into undeserved contempt. Ham was doubtless an aspiring, selfish man, and seeing his father's momentary helplessness, and knowing the effects of habitual intoxication, in all likelihood he seized the opportunity to instigate his two brothers to throw off the restraints of parental authority, and at once to divide the inheritance, representing this single aberration as the result of a depraved appetite which ought to preclude its victim from exercising any longer his high and important functions. We can think of nothing less heinous which could call forth the dreadful sentence that was uttered. The proposal was to subvert the only human government then in existence; and while the waters of the flood were hardly dried up, to plunge the community again into that anarchy and violence which had drawn upon the old world such a signal manifestation of divine displeasure. It was the crime of high treason, the highest crime known in any code of laws; and aggravated in this instance by filial impiety. Many years afterwards, the old Roman, under circumstances in some respects similar, punished his rebellious sons with death. The feelings of Noah at the instant might have urged him to pursue the same course; for the doom he pronounced, manifesting as it does the enormity of the crime, shows that the culprit was not spared by the impulse of pity. But a brief consideration will teach us, that in this instance as in many others, he was guided by an impulse superior to human

sagacity. Had he pronounced the sentence of death, as by virtue of the ample powers delegated to him he had a right to do, he must have stood justified in the eyes of all succeeding generations. Every government, divinely constituted, must have the right of self-preservation; and Noah, if any one ever did, ruled *jure divino*. Yet among that limited family circle, just escaped from the jaws of destruction, and endeared to each other by the fondest ties of consanguinity, and the sympathy inspired by common danger, who could have been found to carry the mandate into execution? Any violent exertion of authority to enforce it, would have been, of all others, the most likely way to produce just the catastrophe he so earnestly wished to avoid, an open rebellion. And even had the justice of the sentence been universally acknowledged, and quietly carried into effect, it would probably have failed to answer his purpose. In that rude and illiterate age, the history of the affair must have been committed entirely to oral tradition, which was likely in a few generations to become so perverted, and the particulars so distorted, that he who had deservedly died the death of a felon, should come to be worshipped as a hero, who had nobly spilt his blood in the cause of freedom. In later times, when Korah, Dathan and Abiram published seditious and disorganizing doctrines to produce a revolution in the government, the parties were dealt with after another fashion, and for good and sufficient reasons. There was a host of confederates, who in modern parlance, sympathized with the movement for reform.

It was necessary to act with promptness and energy, to make a salutary impression on the restless and misguided populace; and there was, moreover, a writer every way qualified to record the event. In the case of Ham, things were different, and his brothers needed no such example to confirm their virtue. But, whatever be the value of this hypothesis, one point is established beyond all dispute. A most flagitious crime had been committed. A subject had openly despised his ruler, a son had shamefully dishonored his father, and the priest had been treated with scorn and contempt by a layman. There had been a display of most deliberate profligacy on the one hand, and of ardent and devoted piety on the other. A system of rewards and punish-

ments was imperatively demanded, calculated to strike one party with dismay, and fill the other with courage and exultation. Death would only have punished the guilty, without rewarding the virtuous. This would have done but half the work. Slavery does the whole.

In this we perceive Noah's situation, and the obligation it imposed on him of maintaining and enforcing those primitive laws which lie at the basis of all civil society. Destroy them, and it inevitably crumbles into ruins.

The assertion that he pronounced this decree under the influence of liquor, or in the heat of passion, is not only unsupported by evidence, but is contradicted by the whole tenor of his life. Moreover, "*prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*" We are distinctly told, that he awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done. He was perfectly restored to consciousness, and was no longer affected by his potations. It is equally clear, that he was not a confirmed inebriate; and that his faculties had not become impaired by vicious indulgence. There is no difficulty in accounting for this disaster so as to leave his character without stain or reproach. If it were his first acquaintance with the beverage, its effect upon him was just what we should expect. Had he been in the way of using it moderately, before the flood, which is highly probable, it is natural to suppose, that owing to long abstinence, or to increased age and infirmities, a less quantity than he had been accustomed to take with impunity, would overpower him. That it was a solitary act of indiscretion there is every reason to believe; because up to the time it happened, he possessed in the highest degree the confidence and respect of Shem and Japheth; and there is not a particle of evidence to show that it was ever repeated. A reiterated indulgence in so vile a propensity, is utterly inconsistent with that sentiment of profound veneration in which his memory is universally held. Nothing had transpired to release his sons from their natural and inherent obligation to treat him with all the respect due to a parent.

Being in full possession of his faculties, Noah must have

been perfectly conscious of the motives which influenced him throughout the whole transaction. It was one of vital importance to himself and to all committed to his charge. For a great length of time, he had been accustomed in all difficult emergencies to seek counsel directly from God; and with his habits of reverence he could not fail on this trying occasion. Nor can we suppose, that God, having manifested so much solicitude to preserve the family, would now refuse to grant the request. Noah had been too long accustomed to the divine responses, to mistake for them, the voice of a heated imagination. We may, therefore, dismiss all apprehension, that he was hurried away by the impetuosity of his feelings into the infliction of a cruel, wanton, or unnecessary punishment. Such excesses are only committed, habitually, by tyrants, who put no restraint upon their passions. Men of ordinary humanity only give way under great excitement, which for the time takes from them the power of self-control. But Noah would fall into no such paroxysms. His temperament had become cooled by six hundred revolutions of the seasons, and his piety confirmed by the habit of centuries. He was, moreover, the father of the culprit; offended indeed, but not alienated. It is fair to conclude, therefore, that the penalty he imposed was no more than sufficient to insure respect for his authority, and secure the stability of his government.

If he could have taken the offender's life, as we may conclude from the example afterwards made of Korah and his accomplices, he might, provided nothing short of it could have secured his object, and of this he was constituted sole judge; it follows, as the greater includes the less, that, in sparing the life, he could prescribe the terms on which it should be retained. By attempting to subvert the government under which he lives, the traitor forfeits all claim to its protection; and if, to insure its continuance, it become necessary to make him a slave, it may rightfully be done. So his posterity, possessing no greater privileges or immunities than what were transmitted by him, may, if the welfare of society continue to demand the sacrifice, be enslaved also.

But an inquiry arises at this point, the most interesting, per-

haps, of any one connected with the subject. It is, whether the descendants of Shem and Japheth may rightfully inflict the punishment ordained by Noah, so as to avail themselves conscientiously of the advantages it confers. The answer to this depends on the result of another inquiry, — whether Noah intended to give them this authority. Is this declaration of his a judicial sentence, pronounced by one having competent authority, intending to confer on them the right to enslave the descendants of Canaan; or is it merely a prediction, that, having the power, they would thus abuse it? In other words, whether the decree clothes the children of Shem and Japheth with legitimate authority to subjugate the children of Canaan, and reduce them to bondage; or, in case of so doing, they expose themselves to all the pains and penalties denounced by a righteous Judge against those who are guilty of fraud and oppression. It may be alleged, that, although the posterity of Canaan was properly condemned to servitude, that circumstance, in itself is insufficient to justify the other party for using them in that capacity. God may and does employ the bad passions of men to accomplish his purposes; nor is the guilt of those agents diminished by the fact that all the while they were pursuing their evil and corrupt propensities, it turns out in the sequel that they had involuntarily lent themselves all along to fulfil his decrees by scourging his enemies. In this way, one becomes flax and the other a spark, and they are consumed together.

When a curse was pronounced upon Canaan, a blessing was simultaneously invoked upon Shem and Japheth. They were connate. Among the good things included in the benediction is the servitude of Canaan. It is certainly there. It is restricted by no qualification, guarded by no exceptions, nor was a whisper heard, nor a hint given, that it would be wrong. Under the circumstances attending it, the language is broad enough to convey the idea that Noah gave to Shem and Japheth and their descendants, not the power only, but the absolute right, to enslave the descendants of Canaan. If men, accustomed to analyze and refine upon their privileges and obligations, might have descried something more explicit, uneducated men, to whom

such pursuits are entirely unknown, could have drawn no other conclusion. And this no one could have known better than Noah. That he was selected to carry on the multifarious operations of building the ark, and fitting it for its eventful career, and at the same time to warn his impenitent contemporaries of their impending danger, bespeaks an intellect of the highest order, united to the most exalted piety. For six hundred years a constant intercourse with a world sunk in wickedness had made him acquainted with the natural heart of man in its inmost depths, its depravity, its selfishness, its supreme love of dominion, and its fondness of display. And above all, he had been admitted to a familiar intercourse with the Deity, calculated immeasurably to expand and vivify his mind, as well as to warm and purify the affections. Unless he had intended that Shem and Japheth and their successors should innocently engage in the practice of slavery, his conduct cannot be explained on rational principles; it was perfect infatuation.

If proved in a court of law, such a procedure would convict him of deliberate fraud; of an intention to lay a trap for their souls, and do it so adroitly too as not to be suspected. In the integrity of their hearts they had just defended him from the assaults of a most insidious foe; they had spurned the intoxicating cup of power, which ambition had presented to their lips; to the utmost of their ability they had nobly discharged their duty; and their bosoms must have dilated with a glow of satisfaction, which told them, in language not to be mistaken, that they had merited his approbation. And his whole demeanor on the occasion was directly calculated to foster and strengthen the impression. Now if they could not in good faith have availed themselves of the award in their favor in its broadest and most comprehensive sense, they were deliberately inveigled into the commission of a crime, but little if at all inferior, in point of turpitude, to that which drew from the insulted patriarch the withering curse upon Canaan himself. Is it to be believed that Shem and Japheth were led blindfold into a situation so full of danger, and there left exposed to the most trying temptations, without a word to guard them against the perils; in fact, so far from being restrained, that they were encouraged to commit the deed?

If so, then was the conduct of Noah towards his dutiful children more to be dreaded, more appalling, infinitely, than was his treatment of Canaan, inasmuch as it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong. It is an imputation upon Noah but little better than the ignominy heaped upon him by Ham. Such conduct would be calculated to confound the distinction between the qualities of our actions, and erase all notions of moral obligation. When his heart was warmed towards those who had proved themselves so faithful and true, and who had indignantly resisted the attempts to corrupt their loyalty; when he was invoking blessings on their heads, he never would have left them exposed to such a calamity. Had he done it, he would have held a lie in his right hand, and their blood would have been on his skirts.

Viewing the subject from another point may aid us in forming a just conclusion. Compare the language used by Noah, with that employed to communicate to Abraham the future destiny of his posterity; or with that of Jeremiah, foretelling the captivity of the Jews; or with that of Daniel predicting the fall of Belshazzar and the ruin of his kingdom. Speaking to Abraham, God said, "know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years, and also, that nation whom they shall serve will I judge, and afterwards shall they come out with great substance." Gen. xv. 13. Jeremiah, after rehearsing the calamities, which should attend the captivity, thus concludes: "And I will punish the King of Babylon and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations." Jer. xxv. 12. The difference between the language used in these predictions, and that employed by Noah on this occasion, is worthy of remark. Here no curse was imposed on the seed of Abraham, either in the earlier, or later periods of their captivity and servitude, but a curse was imposed upon Canaan. No blessings were bestowed upon the Egyptians or Chaldeans, nor is it intimated that they received the labors of the Hebrews on account of their superior virtue. On the contrary, they are threatened with condign punishment

for doing the very things, which it was miraculously foretold they would do.

Throughout the whole of this painful scene, — for exquisitely painful it must have been to the aged patriarch and his whole family, — the object he had in view is most apparent. He meant to enforce, by the highest sanctions the great law of our nature, that which lies at the foundation of all human society, reverence for parents. It was afterwards embodied in the command, Honor thy father and thy mother. We are frequently reminded in Scripture of the great importance which was attached to this law. The Rechabites, on account of their conscientious observance of it on a certain occasion, are mentioned with high commendation. The Apostle, to show his estimate of its value, styles it the first commandment with promise. That law had been violated under the most revolting circumstances. To punish this crime, aimed directly at the existence of all social institutions, Noah instituted slavery; and that the crime should be remembered through all succeeding time he made slavery perpetual. He thus set up a living monument of his displeasure; one that has survived every change from that day to this. It was then as apparent as it has been at any time since, even after it was engraved by the finger of God on tablets of stone, and proclaimed in the thunder and smoke of Sinai, that God would visit the sins of the fathers who hated him upon their children, while he would regard with complacency those who should keep his commandments.

The method adopted by Noah to effect his purpose sufficiently proves, that if not suggested by supernatural inspiration, it was the production of one who perfectly understood the complex machinery of man. We have seen that on Canaan personally, no punishment could have been inflicted which would have accomplished all that Noah had in contemplation. The meaning of it would have been perverted, or it would have quickly passed into oblivion. Nor, would an order imposed on Shem and Japheth that they and their posterity, in remembrance of the event, should forever after afflict the children of Canaan, have been of any more avail. Being attended with no perceptible advantage, it would have been neglected. The public execu-

tioner is regarded with disgust. Noah knew all this when he instituted slavery. He indissolubly united the punishment with a reward. He awakened cupidity and designated the victim. The working of the system still shows the foresight of the contriver.

As Ham, from his age and standing was probably the principal offender, it may appear at first blush that the sentence ought to have been levelled against him. Without due examination, there is danger of being misled by a hasty glance to imagine, that while the child, who might have been comparatively innocent, was punished with unmitigated severity, the father, who was doubtless the instigator, escaped without so much as a reproof. But the facts are otherwise, and Ham had abundant cause to bewail his folly and crime.

In the blessing which Noah conferred upon his sons, Ham was not allowed to participate, and according to universal tradition, confirmed by Scripture, the poorest quarter of the earth was allotted to him as the heritage of his family. Nor will it be denied that, with the exception of Egypt, the glories of which have long since departed, his descendants have occupied the lowest rank in the scale of humanity from time immemorial. From the fact that Canaan was selected as the subject of this calamity, it is fair to presume that in some way he was concerned with his father in the outrage. He would have no right to complain, though another equally guilty escaped. And after all, his position would have been the same had the curse fallen directly upon the father instead of him. The whole family by that means would have been involved in a common ruin, and he with the rest. It is only on the supposition that others were guilty, while he was innocent, of which there is not the least evidence, that he deserves our compassion.

But if Ham and all his family were equally concerned in the offence, there might have been good reasons for restricting the punishment to a single branch. Together, they constituted a third of the human race, and by uniting their means, they might have successfully resisted the execution of the sentence. And then a war, and not a moral would have been perpetuated.

Canaan was cursed as Cain had been. It was not toil simply

that he and his posterity were condemned to endure, — for that was already the common lot of humanity, — but they were to toil without reward. They were to see the fruits of their labor consumed by others, and themselves receive no compensation. But this was not all — nor the part hardest to endure. They were to become ignominious — degraded to be the servant of servants — the most abject of human beings. If not so, it is difficult to imagine what the meaning is of the curse. Cain exclaimed, on hearing his sentence, that his punishment was greater than he could bear.

Some suppose that the posterity of Canaan, not being named in the curse, are not included in it. But a great poet has thought otherwise.

“ Witness the irreverent soul
Of him who built the ark — who, for the shame
Done to his father, heard the heavy curse —
' Servant of servants ' — on his guilty race.”

The same objection, if it be valid, would release the whole race of Adam from the penalty of his transgression. “And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast harkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee, and thou shalt eat of the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground.” Not a word is said about posterity: still the effects of the doom are felt by every mortal man. The sum of the whole matter is this. The entire human race is suffering to a certain extent in consequence of the fall of their great progenitor — a portion of that race are suffering additional evils in consequence of the wickedness of their more immediate ancestor.

The modern doctrine, in relation to the social and political equality of man, has not, therefore, always been true; nor, unless the whole progeny of Canaan be extinct, and swept from the face of the earth, so that not a vestige remains, is it true now. Granting that God did originally make of one blood all

the nations of men, to dwell on the face of the earth, the champion of pure, unsophisticated democracy obtains no advantage. There is no declaration in the Bible, that they were to dwell there in a state of equality; and without that foothold, he cannot advance a step. He cannot deny that the potter has power over clay of the same lump to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor. Canaan was a vessel of dishonor.

All this may seem abundantly mysterious, but it is not to be rejected on that account. The Bible is full of mysteries. The enigma is no greater, nor is the proposition more repugnant to our limited notions of abstract justice, than the creed which inculcates the belief, that the sin of Adam shall be visited upon his posterity. Who can explain, in a satisfactory manner, the doctrine of election?

As Moses intended to perpetuate slavery in the new form of society which he was about to establish for the Hebrews, he deemed it proper to give an account of its origin; and it occupies a large space, comparatively, among the very few events which are related of Noah, during the three centuries and a half that he lived after the flood.

By many, slavery is supposed to be founded in a state of war, and that the master's title to his slave is coincident with the victor's right to his captive. All such only seem to be repeating, without reflection, the theories of heathen writers, who were unacquainted with the pages of inspiration.

History now makes a rapid transition from the time of Noah to that of Abraham. The sacred historian is careful to inform us that Abraham was very rich, and that he had silver and gold, and sheep and oxen, and men and maid servants, and he and she asses and camels. Abraham was a wealthy and powerful Nomadic chieftain, who maintained such an establishment as was customary among men of his rank and standing. It is clear, from the narrative, that he had acquired what most men have coveted — the possession of slaves. These he obtained from various sources; some were the gift of Pharaoh, some of Abimelech, King of Gerar, and some he bought with money. This proves conclusively that slavery at that early day was firmly established, and that it was not monopolized by thieves

and robbers, but practised by the best men then extant, — if Abraham and Abimelech may be taken for samples, — and that they trafficked in slaves, who were transferred from hand to hand, like any other commodity. Furthermore, slavery was expressly recognized as an existing institution when God made his covenant with Abraham, and established his visible church upon earth. Provision was made for the admission into it of such slaves as he then had, or might afterwards acquire; whereby they became partakers of all the spiritual advantages which it was calculated to bestow. “And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant, therefore, thou and thy seed after thee, in their generations. Every man child among you shall be circumcised; he that is born in the house, or bought with money of the stranger, must needs be circumcised. In that self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael, his son, and all the men in the house, born in the house, or bought with money of the stranger.” Gen. xvii. *passim*.

During the whole of this transaction Abraham was a slaveholder — owning men as property. They were not thrust upon him by operation of law against his wishes; nor did they come by inheritance, but they were bought by him with money. The thing was not winked out of sight. It was talked about, and he was instructed by God how they should be treated. In all which no allusion was made to emancipation. Was this possession of slaves regarded by God with approbation or disapprobation? Was it allowed as a favor, or permitted as a punishment? Should any one take the latter view of it, he is bound to explain, why God, when he communicated to Abraham so freely his feeling in regard to the guilty inhabitants of Sodom, concealed so carefully what Abraham was infinitely more interested to know — his own sins and iniquities. And they are further bound to show on what principle slave owners are repelled from the church with contumely in our day, notwithstanding their worth in other respects, when God himself admitted them to the patriarchal church. In all honesty they should inquire why God treated Abraham with all this show of kindness, presenting externally the appearance of a familiar friend, if inwardly he was burning with fury against him for keeping slaves.

It may be said that Abraham, for reasons now inscrutable, was then permitted to violate the moral code in other respects, and particularly that he was living in open adultery with Hagar, Sarah, his wife, being then alive. There is not the least foundation for such a surmise. When the ceremony of circumcision was performed upon Ishmael, he was thirteen years old, and there is no evidence that Abraham ever cohabited with Hagar after his birth. From his exalted reputation for piety and the innumerable instances of divine favor vouchsafed to him, the inference is that no improper connection at that time existed between them. And in confirmation of this it should be remembered that Abraham always manifested the tenderest regard for Sarah; and that it was expressly at her request and directly to promote, as she supposed, her own advantage, that he had intercourse with Hagar at all. Aspersions of this sort, sustained by nothing but vague suspicion, should not be made against good men at random. In explaining obscure passages and in interpreting doubtful transactions, it is always right to allow them all the benefit of the doubt. This privilege the law allows to the vilest criminal. Every man arraigned for crime has a right to put his previous good character in issue before the jury, and they are required to give him the benefit of it. There is no reason why the canons of criticism should withhold what the laws of the land have found it so useful, in promoting the ends of justice, to grant.

The most important step in the biblical history of slavery is the departure of the Hebrews from Egypt. That miraculous event is nowhere ascribed to the sinfulness of slavery, although had that been the cause of it, a happier opportunity was never presented to proclaim it. But the reasons for it, which are stated with great particularity, are altogether of a different nature. "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people: for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bond-men, and from the hand of Pharaoh, King of Egypt." Deut. vii. 7. The time of the promise

had arrived which God had sworn unto Abraham. These were the chosen people, and it was in consequence of enjoying that high distinction, that they were carried out with a mighty arm, while thousands, and perhaps millions, possessing only the ordinary blessings of providence, were left in hopeless and irremediable bondage. Those who are accustomed from the Exodus, to draw inferences favorable to personal freedom, are encroaching upon a field to which they can never make a title.

Whether the Hebrews at that time had slaves or not, we have no means of knowing. The Scriptures are silent upon the point. If they had, no attempt was made to disturb their possession by any statute or ordinance enjoining emancipation. So far from it, that the statute establishing the passover, being the first in their code and the commencement of their legislation, contains this specific injunction: "There shall no stranger eat thereof, but every man's servant that is bought with money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof." Exod. xii. 43. The passover was a religious ordinance, as well as circumcision. These instructions proceed on the assumption, that the men to whom they were addressed were religious men. They must have had great influence in forming the opinions and regulating the conduct of those to whom they were directed; that respecting the passover particularly. Those who had slaves would regard it as sufficient authority to keep them; and those who had none would look upon it as a permission to buy them.

Among the Israelites there were reckoned two degrees of service, or two kinds of servants; the voluntary and involuntary.

The voluntary servant was called the hired servant. He made a contract directly with his employer.

The involuntary was either a Hebrew, sold for a term of years, or a foreigner, called a bond servant, and sold for life. He was a slave. Particular directions are given respecting their mode of treatment.

I. "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of the strangers that are in the land within thy gates: at his day thou shall give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it: lest he cry

against thee unto the Lord, and it be a sin against thee." Deut. xxiv. 14; Matt. xx. 8; Jas. v. 4.

II. Hebrews, who were sold for a specified term of time. "If thy brother that dwelleth with thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee, thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant, but as a hired servant, and a sojourner shall he be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee: and then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his family and to the possession of his fathers shall he return." Hebrews could be sold in this manner either for poverty or for crime. Ex. xxi. 2; Lev. xxv. 39. As to crime, Ex. xxii. 3.

III. Bond-servants or slaves. "Both thy bond-men and bond-maids which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you: of them shall ye buy bond-men and bond-maids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you which they begat in your land; and they shall be your possession; and ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession, and they shall be your bond-men forever: but over your brethren of the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigor." Lev. xxv. 44. With this statute for his support, and fortified by the example of Abraham, an Israelite of the strictest sect must have felt authorized, in the absence of all countervailing authority, to adopt a practice in force everywhere about him; and there is but little doubt, that with the means in his reach, he would avail himself of the privilege.

Having secured a bond-servant, we are next to inquire what interest on property a Hebrew acquired in his person. The position here taken is that the servant became a slave for life. He was the property of the master — a chattel; and as it is expressed in the significant phraseology of the New Testament, *not his own, but bought with a price*. The language is there applied to designate a different relation, nevertheless, it is plainly derived from the dialect of slave-owners.

It is plain that he occupied a different position from that of a hired servant, or that of a Hebrew who had been bought.

With the hired servant, the employment and the price had both been fixed beforehand. He worked in the vineyard for a penny a day. The Hebrew reduced to bondage, although he could claim no such immunity, was to receive the same treatment as the hired servant; he was to be used kindly; nor could he be compelled to serve with rigor or great severity. At the expiration of his term the master was required to furnish him gratuitously with articles of living until he could procure a subsistence by his own exertions. Deut. xv. 13. Widely different was the condition of the bond-servant, and much to his disadvantage. It had all the traits which distinguish slavery at the present day, and which have ever been inseparably connected with it. In some respects the Mosaic law towards slaves was harsher than would now be tolerated in any civilized community. The master could use them with great severity. "If a man smite his servant or his maid with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall surely be punished; notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two he shall not be punished, for he is his money." Ex. xxi. 20. It is useless to say that one whom the laws of the land permitted to be used in this manner was not a slave. Laws are only the reflection of public sentiment; and no very vivid imagination is required to portray the condition of the slave where such laws prevailed. While the magistrate could only inflict forty stripes upon a freeman for a wilful breach of the laws, the master, to enforce obedience and maintain discipline among his slaves, could impose as many as he pleased; and even if death ensued, provided the sufferer lingered a day or two, the laws took no cognizance of the offence. And the reason which is given for it, in the estimation of many, would only aggravate the hardship. The slave was the master's chattel—*his money*. A law drawing a broader distinction between master and slave, or marked with greater severity, does not exist south of Mason and Dixon's line. Among the Hebrews murder was felony, punishable with death. The wilful murderer was not protected in a city of refuge. Deut. xix. 11. But if the victim be a slave who died by the hand of his master, the question of murder never arises, however aggravated the circumstances. The injury was only accounted a misdemeanor, if the

slave died outright, and if he lived a short time it was no offence at all. The reason is this. To constitute murder, there must be a malicious intent to kill. To convict a master of murdering his slave would involve this absurdity: that a man in full possession of his faculties would deliberately destroy his own property for the sake of gratifying his malice. Now it must be apparent, that a master, actuated by hatred and revenge to a degree perfectly diabolical, but retaining sufficient self-command to incur the guilt of murder, would readily perceive that he could much more effectually accomplish his purpose by keeping his enemy alive, over whom he had perfect control, and could torment as he pleased. Although the law under such circumstances would not presume the master to be guilty of murder, it admitted that in a sudden outbreak of passion he might commit manslaughter; and for that offence the punishment, which is not named, and which on that account no one can suppose was death, was to be inflicted.

The master's property, in his slave, was guarded by the same sanctions that protected all his other possessions. "Neither shalt thou *desire* thy neighbor's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbor's house, his fields, his man-servant, or his maid-servant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is thy neighbor's." Deut. v. 21. This is according to the last edition of the commandments which was published in Horeb. We have a schedule of the principal articles of property which constituted the wealth of that period. By contrasting this with the tenth commandment proclaimed on Sinai, it would seem that it was not intended any longer to include the wife in the category of chattels. The separate items are here arranged according to their relative importance in the estimation of the lawgiver.

Some persons who allow that bond-servants were *quasi* slaves, or slaves for the time being, deny that their servitude was necessarily for life. They contend that such servants were emancipated absolutely when the trumpet sounded in the year of jubilee, even in opposition to the will of the master. They cite Lev. xxv. 10. "Ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you, and ye shall return

every man to his possession, and ye shall return every man to his family."

This law, it is believed, was intended as a regulation applicable solely to the Hebrews; and had no relation whatever to bond-servants, who could on no account be Hebrews. Lev. xxv. 42. The only difficulty attending its interpretation, lies in determining to whom the epithet, *inhabitant*, is applicable. It doubtless embraced all Hebrews who had been sold either for debt or for crime, and whose term of service had not expired. If any Hebrews were excepted they were probably those who remained with the master by their own choice after the time elapsed for which they had been sold. They had the power to compel the master to retain them. The law prescribed the method by which they should be examined to ascertain whether their declaration was made voluntarily or by constraint. It was to be done by the magistrate privately. They were further to submit to the degrading ceremony of having their ear bored with an awl, for the purpose, probably, of receiving some badge of their condition. If they continued steadfast through all these ceremonies they were thenceforth the property of the master forever. Such is the law. Ex. xxi. 5, *et seq.* But were bond-servants, who could not be of the stock of Abraham, emancipated by the jubilee? That is the question.

The founder of the Hebrew Commonwealth intended that it should be perpetual. To secure this result, he carefully attempted to guard against that inequality of condition which has ever been the bane of governments, and the prolific source of discontent and revolution. He foresaw that superior endowments, whether of body or mind, and all those natural and acquired advantages, which elevate one man above another, and which are essential to civilization and social advancement, would be at work to derange his system; and that it would require to be frequently adjusted. There would be a tendency to arrogance on the one hand and servility on the other, attended with *envy, hatred and malice and all uncharitableness*. To prevent, or at least to mitigate these evils he tried to secure in a measurable degree an equality of wealth, at any rate to guard the masses against extreme poverty, the natural conse-

quence of concentrating in a few families a large portion of the soil, leaving the great body of the people dependent on their bounty or caprice for subsistence. To this end it was ordained, "That the land shall not be sold forever; for the land is mine: for ye were strangers and sojourners with me; and in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land. If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold. And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it, then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus to the man to whom he sold it, that he may return unto his possession. But if he be not able to restore unto him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubilee, and in the jubilee it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession." Lev. xxv. 23. Had it not been for this law, a man, who had bought land, would have held it by an indefeasible title, and might have transmitted it to his posterity. He might have entailed it. Thus a few families, in process of time, might have acquired overgrown possessions, while the populace would have become hopelessly poor, and having no interest in upholding the established government, might easily be led by demagogues to overthrow it, for the chance of what might be got in the scramble. At any rate, they would pull down those above them, and that would be some comfort. Moses was a wise man. He therefore provided that at the expiration of forty-nine years, at the latest, things should resume their original condition. In some instances lands had been sold, in others, the person. At the jubilee, a general bankrupt law was proclaimed, extending to debtors of all descriptions, and cancelling all pecuniary obligations; by virtue of which lands that had been alienated, reverted to their former owners, or their heirs; and owners were restored to their lands. Every Hebrew, therefore, was a freeholder and had an estate either in possession or reversion. He had a strong motive to uphold and protect the government which guaranteed his rights. But the bond-servant, the son of a heathen, had no such hopes or expectations. He had no part or lot in the matter. The

stronger the government stood, the worse it was for him. *To love our country, our country must be lovely*; but when did it present such an aspect to him? The memory of a thousand wrongs, real or imaginary, would rankle in his bosom. He would hate the individual who had inflicted them, and the State which conferred the power to do it. Turned loose upon the world, with no one to control him, he would be "*fit for treason, stratagem and spoils.*" A legislator who had once sanctioned slavery, and by living in the midst of it, had become familiar with its tendencies, would never take such a step. Infinitely better would it have been, never to have introduced slavery at all. In this instance there was no necessity for it. It was not imposed, as in our own case, by a metropolitan government, whose power was irresistible, but it was voluntarily assumed.

The policy which Moses adopted towards slaves, was much more liberal and humane, notwithstanding the features we have discovered in it, than had been enjoined by any previous legislator. To provide in some degree for their personal security, and protect them from brutal assaults, he declared that certain injuries inflicted by the master should be cause of emancipation. Ex. xxi. 26. They enjoyed the sabbath as a day of rest. This was in accordance with the whole tenor of his administration, which, in everything that tended to soften and refine, and elevate humanity, was far in advance of any civil polity then in existence. But these modifications of slavery have no tendency to prove that he intended to abolish the institution. By removing its most revolting features, which constituted the principal objections to its continuance, he took the best means to perpetuate it. In no particular, was the slave rendered less valuable to the master. The master's right to his property was not violated, nor was his authority curtailed, to render that property available.

The jubilee ceased with the Babylonish captivity, and was never revived. The fragment of the nation which returned, and reorganized the government, selected such of their ancient laws as were adapted to their altered condition. They restored the sabbatical year. Neh. x. 31. But the jubilee was not re-

stored. Nevertheless, the people remembered their ancient habits of slavery, and retained their taste for them. They did not wait to get settled and fixed in their former habitations before resuming it, but they brought it back in their company. The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand, three hundred and three score: besides their servants and their maids, of whom there were seven thousand, three hundred and thirty-seven." Ez. ii. 65; Neh. vii. 67. Nehemiah was the employer of slaves, if not absolutely a slave-holder himself. Neh. iv. 23. Not a word is said against slavery by him or Ezra. Haggai and Zachariah, who prophesied under Nehemiah, are equally silent, and so is Malachi, who is supposed to have been contemporary. This was not owing to a criminal indifference to abuses. Many abuses were condemned, and their continuance prohibited; and, what is remarkable, the people seem to have been perfectly docile, and to have obeyed their teachers without remonstrance. They abandoned secular business on the sabbath—they relinquished the foreign wives they had married, contrary to the Mosaic institutions, and the rich who had oppressed the poor, agreed to renounce the practice. Neh. v. 1; Ez. x. 18. Nehemiah was a vigorous reformer, and spared nothing out of compliance to popular clamor, which he deemed incompatible with national purity. And yet he made no provision for the liberation of slaves. They could not look forward to the end of fifty years as the termination of their bondage. Even had the trumpets of the jubilee proclaimed such glad tidings once, their voice was henceforth forever silenced. If slavery were a wicked institution, this was a favorable time to suppress it. There was no greater reason why it should have been tolerated, than any other corrupt practice.

One text is constantly thrust forward by abolitionists as showing conclusively the sinfulness of slavery; the true import of which, in their zeal for the cause they seem to have mistaken: "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, shall surely be put to death." Ex. xxi. 16. Under the term *man* they suppose Moses included every human being without exception. They further assume that every negro now

held in slavery has been stolen in the sense that then constituted the crime of manstealing. They next infer that every slave-owner is a man-thief, who, if the Mosaic laws were now in force, would justly suffer death. They appear to mistake the meaning of the passage entirely. It is this: "If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, then that thief shalt die; and thou shalt put away evil from among you." Deut. xxiv. 7. An Israelite never would have been deceived by such sophistry. He knew that Moses expressly provided for the existence of slavery, and he would have seen that there was a wide difference between buying a heathen slave, or holding the children of his slaves who were born in his house, for which he could show abundant authority, and kidnapping his next-door neighbor and selling him into foreign servitude.

The master has been challenged to produce his authority from Scripture to sell a slave. Because no form of words expressly giving the power can be found, abolitionists argue that none exists. But the master had a right to buy a slave, who by that means became his property, his chattel, and in the absence of all prohibition, the right to sell must result from the right to buy. Who can purchase where there is no vendor? In all the tomes which cumber the shelves of the civilian, it will be equally difficult to find the section which in so many words confers the power on a man to sell his farm, or his wood, hay, or stubble. Nobody looks for such permission. Unless forbidden, the unqualified right to dispose of his property is presumed. A man may sell his horse without the consent of any one, but he can only deal in gunpowder and brandy according to the statute in such case made and provided. But unless the sale of them had been regulated, they would have been subject to the ordinary rules of commerce like pork and flour. An Israelite could buy a slave of a foreigner; what was there to interfere with his right of selling him the next day to his neighbor? But it is reiterated that there is no evidence that Abraham ever sold a slave; neither is there evidence that he ever sold sheep or oxen, or he-asses, or she-asses, or camels. We have no extracts from his day-book or ledger. He was a mighty

prince; and it was the business of the historian to exhibit him as father of the faithful, and not in the character of a merchant. But he had silver and gold, and it is very likely that he obtained them in exchange for some of his surplus productions. He bought slaves; why should he not have sold them?

The following facts are adduced to show that the bond-servant was property — a chattel. He was a marketable commodity. He was sold for money. He was bought with money. He is denominated money. Upon the master's death he was transferred by mere operation of law like other chattels to the next of kin. He could not be treated like a brute, because he was not a brute. He was a man — but a man owned by another man.

Thus stood slavery when Christianity was introduced. Had a Jew at that time, for the purpose of learning whether he might innocently own a slave, resorted to the Scriptures then in being for information, and, without any preconceived opinions, honestly endeavored to find out his rights and privileges from their most obvious import, he would have discovered, in the first place, the curse which had been pronounced upon Canaan. He would have found that slavery had been practised by Abraham, the father of the faithful; and that, in the covenant which God made with him, it was expressly recognized and permitted. When he reverently opened the law of Moses, which he had been taught to respect as emanating directly from Jehovah, the first fact that struck him would be that slavery was expressly allowed, and that throughout the whole code regulations were interspersed to be observed by both parties — masters and slaves. Had he inquired what right or interest he could acquire in the person of the slave, a slight examination would have convinced him that a slave was a chattel, an article of merchandise, which could be bought and sold. All these laws he would have regarded in full force, power, and virtue — their authority unquestioned, their validity unimpaired. He would have been irresistibly led from this examination to the conclusion that slavery was lawful; and of his authority to buy a slave, he could have felt no apprehension.

But whatever may have been the position of the Jew, how is

it in regard to ourselves? Has the moral aspect of slavery been changed by anything in the New Testament? Has the divine Author of Christianity condemned it directly or indirectly? Has he said or done anything from which it is fair to infer that he considered slavery opposed to the doctrines he taught? Have the apostles condemned it? Is there proof that they regarded slave-holding as contrary to the precepts of their religion, or inconsistent with the professions of a disciple? Slavery was most extensively practised in their day. It met their view in every direction. It attracted much of their attention, and is frequently alluded to in their writings. Under such circumstances, if neither Jesus Christ, nor his apostles, condemned it, nor in any way testified their disapprobation of it, we have a right to conclude that slavery, in a moral point of view, stands just where it did before Christianity was introduced.

No one pretends that slavery is directly and peremptorily forbidden in the Bible. Such a prohibition would settle all controversy about it at once. None, in fact, could have arisen, any more than there has about the rightfulness of murder or arson. Nevertheless, some maintain that, although not abolished *in totidem verbis*, it is done just as effectually by inference and implication. It is readily conceded that a law may in this way be just as effectually repealed, as by the use of the most significant and appropriate words in the language. We have only to learn the will of the law-maker, and when that is clearly and unequivocally expressed, it is our duty promptly to conform to it. Thus, when, by a new law, a matter or thing is enjoined or prohibited contrary to the law then in force, so that both cannot be observed at the same time, the old law must yield to the new, although the repeal be not specifically mentioned. The change which was made in the day to be observed as the sabbath is an instance of setting aside a law by implication. As there cannot be two sabbaths in a week, and the apostles and early Christians kept the first day of the week, and disregarded the seventh, we are justified in following their steps, considering the alteration to have the sanction of divine authority. But it will not do to infer that a law is assuredly repealed because expressions may be found that raise a doubt whether it be re-

pealed or not. Clear and positive laws cannot be nullified by doubts. The utmost the doubt can do is to cause a thorough examination of the subject, and the law can only be disregarded with safety when all doubts are removed.

The assertion has been made that the continuance of slavery is inconsistent with the command in Deut. xxiii. 15: "Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant that is escaped from his master unto thee. He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in the place which he shall choose, in one of thy gates where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him." Those who take this ground say that the foregoing injunction was intended to prevent a Hebrew master from reclaiming a runaway slave, and thus indirectly destroy the institution by rendering it impracticable. It is a sound principle of interpretation, and universally admitted, that all laws, if possible, shall receive such a construction as to render them operative. In other words, that all shall remain in force until repealed. Our opponents readily admit that there was a law authorizing involuntary bondage or slavery. Is it clear, beyond all reasonable doubt, that this regulation respecting vagabonds, was enacted purposely to repeal it? Instead of magnifying the inconsistencies of two laws, our first attempt should be to reconcile them. If that can be done on fair principles, both may stand; and in this case it may be done by adopting a construction both easy and natural. It is by applying the ordinance to such slaves only as escaped into Judea from the surrounding countries. When the neighboring slaves came to understand that, by the Mosaic law, they would be sheltered and protected, such an event would frequently happen, for slavery was then universally practised. The regulation was simply intended to assert the dignity, and maintain the sovereignty of the state against foreign encroachments. It is so in Canada at this day. A slave who gets there may set his master at defiance. But, on the supposition that it applied equally to slaves who escaped from one member of the confederacy to another, it becomes important to inquire, what, in the eye of the law, constituted a good and sufficient escape? Was it necessary to flee from one tribe to another, or from one city to another, or was it enough, when

the master's eye was off, just to step to the next-door neighbor and claim his protection? If it were intended in good faith to abolish slavery, the latter supposition is most probable, as it could be most easily accomplished. But the advocate for this principle ought to show how slavery could have been established consistently with it in the first instance; or why the jubilee or any other means was necessary to insure emancipation. Very few slaves, with this expedient at hand ready to be applied on all occasions, would have required any further assistance. It would seem that the slaves of Shime thought differently, for they fled to Achish, king of Gath. They were afraid to trust themselves in the limits of Judea; and even the arm of a foreign potentate was insufficient for their security. Their master pursued and retook them, though at the expense of his own life. 1 Kings ii. 40.

But the greatest stress is laid upon the language of our Lord Jesus Christ. It has been asserted over and over again, and is believed by the great mass of abolitionists, that the rules he laid down to regulate our intercourse with our fellow-men, are absolutely inconsistent with the existence of slavery; and that if it were once permitted by divine authority, it is so no longer.

The attempt has been made in the preceding pages to show that slavery, of the most unequivocal stamp, was allowed both under the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, and that nothing cancelling it can be found in the Old Testament. Consequently, at the time of our Saviour's advent, the right to hold slaves might have been vindicated on scriptural authority.

But, in the view of the abolitionist, things are entirely changed. He plants himself upon this ground: Jesus Christ, he says, commanded us to love our neighbor as ourselves. This rule he holds to be utterly repugnant to slave-holding, and, if carried out in the spirit of it, would at once overthrow the practice.

To test the soundness of this conclusion, we recur to the circumstances under which this alleged precept was spoken, as well as to the precept itself. They are related Matthew xxii. 39. A lawyer asked Jesus a question: "Master, which is the greatest commandment in the law?" Jesus, himself, it should be re-

membered, was creating at this time the most intense sensation throughout all Judea. It was known that he professed to be the Messiah, a personage long looked for in the Jewish community with the greatest interest. By many his claims were allowed; and by many more he was regarded as a teacher come from God. Multitudes thronged about him to hear his preaching, learn his doctrines, and witness his miracles. Now mark the question. In the midst of this excitement, it was not what directions do you give? what peculiar notions do you inculcate? what new regulations do you propose for our observance? He was not asked what the law ought to be, nor how he would modify it, if left to him. He was simply asked what it was. "Master, what is the great commandment in the law?" To this inquiry a Jew would attach but one idea. He could only understand by it the law of Moses. The lawyer was so understood. The reply of Jesus was, "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." His answer consisted in a bare repetition of the law of Moses without the addition or subtraction of a tittle. Deut. vi. 4; Lev. xix. 18. Jesus did not advance this as a new commandment, nor apply it in a new sense. It was not spoken with a view to any new relations that had sprung up in society; nor does he declare it to be binding by virtue of any peculiar authority vested in him. It did not come forth spontaneously in the course of his teaching and exhortations, but was drawn out by an interrogatory. It was not a new truth, nor an old truth in a new dress. It added nothing to the existing obligation to love God and our neighbor. That duty rested on the law of Moses, and was known to all the Jews, being read in the synagogue every Sabbath day. It stands in the law side by side with the clause permitting slavery. In the days of Moses the precept, "Love your neighbor as yourself," was not considered to interfere with slavery. How, then, does a bare repetition of the law, without note or comment, render them inconsistent now? Does this reply of Jesus repeal the law of Moses, or any portion of it?—

no matter under what aspect it is viewed, municipal, ceremonial, moral, — does it repeal, restrain, modify, or in any way change, any law whatever, or any portion of the law? It simply declared, in the fewest possible words, without ambiguity or circumlocution, what the law was. If this can be construed into the repeal of a law, it remains to be seen what method is sufficient to declare a law to be binding.

Neither is the counterpart of this declaration, namely, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," although cited with equal confidence, of any more value to the abolitionist. They both stand on the same foundation: "For this, said Jesus, is the law and the prophets." He did not advance it as a new thing, original and binding, because he willed it. It is plainly a corollary, from the preceding proposition, "Love your neighbor as yourself." It is the sentiment called into action, the principle reduced to practice. It covers the same ground, neither more nor less; and as that did not abolish slavery, neither can this.

Notwithstanding, Do as you would be done by, is the effective war-cry of the abolitionist. He has inscribed it on his banners. It has nerved his arm in the conflict, and consoled him in the hour of despondency. It has contributed more to his achievements than all other things together. It demands, therefore, a corresponding degree of attention.

When the abolitionist ceases to fulminate, and condescends to reason, he constructs his argument somewhat after this fashion:

Every man, if he were a slave, would wish to be free; and on that account would have all men do for him what lay in their power to procure his enfranchisement. Every man is bound, at all times, and under all circumstances, to do for others as he would have them do for him. Every man, therefore, is bound, at all times, and under all circumstances, to exert himself to the utmost to liberate all who may be enslaved.

In discussing the question of slavery, he appears to take for granted, that mankind are endowed with a faculty, which, at once, and without the intervention of terms, enables them to comprehend the subject in all its relations. This qualification is sometimes called conscience, sometimes common sense. It is

a sort of inward light, an instinct which reveals all its bearings, and illuminates all its intricacies. By aid of it they are enabled to pronounce, off-hand, that slavery is contrary to the word of God. They require no external evidence. They go into no investigation. The decision is directly the result of their own consciousness. They know that slavery is wrong. When emancipation is the subject of debate, they cut short all discussion by the blunt inquiry, "would you like to be a slave?" "No." "Then obey the Scripture rule. Do as you would be done by. Liberate your negroes."

This is philosophy made easy. It removes the necessity of collecting and arranging facts, weighing arguments, balancing contradictory opinions, and reconciling conflicting authorities. It dispels all doubt and hesitation, and substitutes unbounded confidence and self-complacency.

Dr. Wayland, in one of his letters to Dr. Fuller, relates the following anecdote :

"I have been told that the Rev. Dr. Stiles, afterwards president of Yale College, during his residence in Newport, being in want of a domestic, sent by the captain of a slave ship a barrel of rum to the coast of Africa, to be exchanged for a slave. The venture was successful, and, in due time, a negro boy was brought back. It chanced afterwards, in passing through his kitchen, he observed the boy in tears. He asked him the cause of his sorrow, and the poor fellow answered that he was thinking of his parents, and his brothers and sisters, whom he should never see again. In an instant the truth flashed upon the master's mind, and he saw the evil he had done."

No one doubts that slavery conflicts, in many important particulars, with the bodily comforts of its victims. It subjects them to many hardships and privations. But this is not the inquiry. The true question is, whether it be inconsistent with the precepts of the Christian religion. And the way to settle the point is, not by an appeal to our sympathies, but by a rigid examination of holy writ. What saith the Scriptures? We have no controversy with any one who does not acknowledge this proposition. Dr. Wayland does not allege directly that this change in the sentiments of Dr. Stiles, was wrought by any-

thing he discovered in the Bible. It is evident that it was not. The whole effect was produced by the touching tones of the boy's distress. Eloquence, and not logic, carried the day, and it is not a solitary example.

Should any one be at a loss about the true interpretation of the rule, "do as you would be done by," he has the means at hand to solve his doubts. We are assured, it is the law and the prophets. An examination of that code will teach him, that it enjoins a steady support of government; that it requires the punishment of offenders; that it is friendly to the acquisition and protection of property; that it promotes the existence of private and political rights, and upholds and maintains that amount of subordination in society which recognizes the distinction of master and slave.

But if we abandon the Scriptures, and resort to our feelings for a guide, no degree of honesty can certainly protect us from the danger of pursuing an *ignis fatuus*.

Take an illustration. "I was interrupted in the hey-day of this soliloquy," says Yorick in his *sentimental journey*, "by a voice which I took to be that of a child, complaining, that it could not get out. I looked up and down the passage, and seeing neither man, woman, nor child, I went out without further attention. In my return through the passage, I heard the same words repeated twice over, and looking up, I saw a starling hanging in a little cage. 'I can't get out, I can't get out,' said the starling. I stood looking at the bird; and to every person who came through the passage, it ran fluttering to the side to which they approached it, with the same lamentation of its captivity; 'I can't get out, I can't get out,' said the starling. God help thee, said I, but I will let thee out, cost what it will; so I turned about the cage to get at the door. It was twisted, and double twisted so fast with wire, that there was no getting it open without pulling the cage to pieces. I took both hands to it. The bird flew to the place where I was attempting its deliverance, and thrusting his head through the trellis, pressed his breast against it, as if impatient. I fear, poor creature, said I, I cannot get thee at liberty. 'No,' said the starling, 'I can't get out, I can't get out.'"

Most people will agree, that the Rev. Dr. Stiles and the *Rev. Mr. Yorick*, were brought to see the heinousness of involuntary restraint by the same process. Who will call it an intellectual process? But Dr. Stiles showed himself to be much the honester man. In liberating the negro, as he did, he was dealing with his own property, and invaded nobody's rights. Mr. Yorick chose to indulge his sympathy at the expense of another. He pulled to pieces his neighbor's bird cage, and liberated the inmate, with which he had no business to meddle. If he were not morally guilty of stealing, it was a most impertinent interference with another man's property; and were he on his trial for the offence, his fine sentiments ought not to afford him protection against the law and the testimony.

But this short-hand method of settling questions, is open to a variety of objections. What well-grounded confidence can one have in his opinions on the one hand, or what security for his rights on the other? A fit of indignation is enough frequently to work an entire change in the value we put on men and things. Our estimation of good and evil, varies from youth to age. It is not the same in sickness as in health—in prosperity as in adversity—with an east wind as with a west. We hear, moreover, daily about the magical effects of education, and the wonderful influence it exerts over the destinies of individuals and nations. If different systems be pursued, different results will be produced. Men will acquire conflicting habits, tastes, and feelings. They will be swayed by different impulses, or by the same impulse in opposite directions. This diversity of preferences and inclinations, will beget a corresponding variety of opinions. *Who shall decide when doctors disagree?* When the elements take a religious turn, they usually raise a storm of fanaticism, ending perhaps in a calm of indifference, and, not unfrequently, in open infidelity.

The theory which plants in us an infallible guide, ready and able to lead us in the paths of rectitude, is entirely inconsistent with the belief that there can be any difference of opinion among men upon any subject whatever. Notwithstanding all that contending parties may pretend, one side or the other is invariably a hypocrite.

But it is sometimes said, that we have a conscience, which was given for the very purpose of teaching us our duty towards our fellows, and that properly consulted, it will never deceive us. If my conscience invariably determines my duty towards my neighbor, and points with unerring certainty to the course I ought to pursue, my neighbor is equally bound to submit to whatever my conscience imposes. There cannot be two rules of right in the same case, conflicting one with the other. He must not say that his conscience teaches him exactly the reverse. Let any man say if he is willing to submit his rights to the naked arbitrament of my conscience. If he be willing to trust my integrity, that does not relieve him from the apprehension that I may make mistakes.

So it is certain that the purest motives and the most upright intentions are insufficient to guard against error. This is manifest in the history of St. Paul. That he had no inward light to teach his duty towards the early Christians we are told in his own words, for he expressly affirms that, in persecuting them, he acted ignorantly, and on that circumstance alone he relies for pardon. But he never could have made that assertion, had he known it was wrong, by any process whatever. That he might have known it, is true; but he did not, for he thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus.

It will be found, too, that the warmest sympathy and the most exalted friendship are equally unavailing. No one questions the affectionate tenderness of Eve, when she presented the forbidden fruit, and no one is ignorant of the consequences.

The problem which men find most difficult to settle is, what will best advance their own good. They grope about in the dark. They are exposed to failures from the innumerable errors they commit with the best intentions in the world. They try experiment after experiment, and set up theory after theory. They are continually cheating themselves, notwithstanding the intimate knowledge they must have of their own affairs. If men find it so hard to determine what will best promote their own good, it is difficult to believe that they are endowed with a faculty which determines at a glance what will best conduce to the welfare of another.

But, in addition to this intuitive perception of the relations which exist between himself and his neighbor, and the duties which result from them, the abolitionist practically lays claim to another faculty, which he must possess before he can discharge the labors he has undertaken with any degree of success. It is the ability to determine, with equal facility, the relations which exist between third parties, and the duties growing out of them. Perhaps he never saw the parties upon whose conduct he thus undertakes to pronounce. Now, should such a man emancipate his own slaves because he would not willingly be a slave himself, he would doubtless meet with his appropriate reward; but his peculiar views confer no authority on him to summon one who thinks differently to follow suit. If he can show by the Word of God that slavery is wrong, I am bound to imitate him; but none the more on account of his conscience. I may ask, as Paul did, Why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience? Neither his conscience nor mine was given to regulate the intercourse between third parties.

But if the faculty be called common sense, we would inquire what propriety there is in calling that *common sense*, which, on one side of Mason and Dixon's line, acknowledges a principle to be right, and reprobates it on the other?—which, previous to 1776, never questioned the justice of it, even at the north, and now holds it up as the greatest iniquity?

A thousand instances may be imagined in which a literal compliance with the maxim, Do as you would be done by, in the sense attached to it by the abolitionists, when engaged in the discussion of this topic, would be impracticable, except by prostrating all government. The warden of the State Prison restrains men solely against their will, while no one pretends that he would relish such a regimen in his own person any better than they do. He is not censured, though he tramples the rule under his feet. But, it is said in his justification, that the convict is rightfully restrained, while the slave is not. Prove that the slave is held wrongfully, and that ends the controversy. But whether he be or not, is the very point in debate, and must not be assumed. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that the convict is detained because he is guilty. The warden, in his

official capacity, never inquires. He only looks at the *mittimus*. Yet, were he absolutely assured of the prisoner's innocence, his deportment would be the same. He would impose the same restraints and enforce the same discipline. He would do it because, under the circumstances in which he was placed, the welfare of society required it. The law made it his duty, and gave him authority to enforce it. Any other course would set the notions of the warden above the laws of the land, and make those notions of paramount authority. If he may act independently, so may others. But no one will advocate such a course, because it leads directly to anarchy. Officers would neglect to serve process if it would be disagreeable, in return, to have process served upon them. For the same cause, witnesses might refuse to testify. Juries would not sit. Judges would withhold sentence. Court houses would be shut. Jails would be open. Malefactors would go at large, because no one could conscientiously execute sentence upon them. All human government would practically come to an end, and then the power of the strongest or the cunningest would prevail. All that can be said in connection with this is, that the convict is restrained because such is the law of the land.

A personage whose history is well known once took a different view of the subject, and the consequences, so far as regarded himself personally, were sufficiently disastrous to deter others from a similar attempt. The adventure is thus related: "Don Quixote raised his eyes and saw approaching in the same road about a dozen on foot, strung like beads by the necks, in a great iron chain, and all handcuffed. As soon as Sancho Panza saw them he said: — "This is a chain of galley slaves — persons forced by the King, to serve in the galleys." "How! forced do you say?" quoth Don Quixote, "is it possible that the King should force anybody?" "I said not so," answered Sancho, "but that they were persons, who for their crimes, are condemned by law to the galleys, where they are forced to serve the King." "In truth then," replied Don Quixote, "these people are conveyed by force and not voluntarily?" "So it is," said Sancho. "Then," said his master, "here the execution of my office takes place, which is to defeat violence, and relieve the wretched."

But the rule literally applied to slavery will prove a two-edged instrument, cutting both ways. Suppose that a slave should say to his master:—"Pray sir, would you like to be a slave?" It admits of one answer, "No." "Then," continues the slave, "you profess to be a christian, and you know that the Bible enjoins upon all men to do as they would be done by. Upon your own admission, you must make me free." "But," the master replies, "let us examine into this matter. You say we must do as we would be done by. If you were a white man, born in a country where slavery was allowed, educated in the persuasion that it was right and conscientiously entertaining that belief—having your property all invested in slaves and dependent on them for support—and intending moreover on all occasions to treat them with kindness, I ask would you not, in view of all these considerations, desire that your slaves should continue in your possession and perform your work? Now if the black man be as frank as the white, he answers yes. Then would retort the master—mind your business—do as you would be done by—there is no cause for separation.

We may imagine that two slaves escape from their master, one of whom takes refuge with an abolitionist, while the other less fortunate, falls into the hands of a slave owner. They both put up the same petition, Do as you would be done by. In compliance with the request, the abolitionist aids his guest to escape. The slave-owner is equally intent upon complying with the injunction, but he has been taught in another school, and puts a different construction upon the precept. He argues thus: If a man had caught one of my negroes running away, I should wish that he would send him home, and I will do the same. I will do as I would be done by—and he does it. He returns the slave to his master.

Take another illustration, for their number is infinite. A slave goes to an abolitionist and says—You are rich, and I am a poor slave. My master values me at five hundred dollars. You can pay that sum out of your abundance without feeling the inconvenience. Were you in my condition, nothing would gratify you so much as to have some benevolent individual do the like, and make you free. In your speeches and declara-

tions you have always professed the warmest interest in the slave ; and I now appeal to your sympathy. Only do as you would be done by. But this is a hard saying, who can hear it.

The negro, however, is not so easily repulsed. In despair of effecting his object by entreaty, he resorts to remonstrance ; and having profited by anti-slavery declamations, he assumes the attitude of an orator. Pray sir, can you tell me why slaves are held in bondage ? It is not for ornament, but for use. They cultivate cotton and rice, and sugar and tobacco, by means of which your ship-owners, and your merchants, and your manufacturers are enriched to the great advantage of the whole community. The slave contributes in articles of food or clothing, to the daily wants of every man, woman and child in the country. But lay not the flattering unction to your soul that a single article enumerated — entering as they all do into the arrangements of your domestic economy, is a necessary of life, or indispensable to your comfort. Before the fertile imaginations of Arkwright and Whitney produced the spinning-frame and the saw gin, your fathers were clad in flax and wool, and your fathers' sons are no better than they were. And while you are dulcifying your tea and coffee with the sugar of the tropics, merely to heighten their flavor, — let me impress on your conscience, that all this gratification is only purchased by the blood and tears of slavery. The maple and the beet proffer their sweets untainted by these impurities — yielding an article equal to the cane in all respects but in price — a circumstance to be detected only by your pocket, and not by your palate. Rice is not essential to your support, and for that vile weed, tobacco, what woman, whether abolitionist or not, will plead for its cultivation ? Look at the whole circle of slave-grown articles. Not one is indispensable. Abandon them, and in a few years slavery must and will vanish. Cease to call upon Hercules, and put your shoulder to the wheel. The master must relax his hold from necessity. It is the only way to accomplish your object. He is deaf to all your importunities. Your efforts have only excited his hostility. They have increased our hardships and multiplied our privations, and your influence is only felt in aggravating our calamities.

While pretending so much attachment to the slave, your whole activity is exerted in riveting his shackles. Do as you would be done by. Abstain from slave-grown articles, and show your consistency. Teach others by your example so to do, and we shall be free.

But a limit must be set to this mode of applying the rule, or it will become ridiculous as well as mischievous. One rogue can aid another rogue in his difficulties, and plead it in justification if the application be universal. One drunkard may supply another drunkard with liquor, and say with perfect truth that he did just as he would be done by.

Both premises laid down by the abolitionist in his syllogism are false. It is not universally true, that a man is under a moral obligation to render to another all those acts which he may most ardently desire that the other would render to him, and which he may honestly think are his due. This can only be predicated of such acts as are just and proper. And the justice and propriety of the acts are tested, not by our feelings and preferences, which are constantly fluctuating, but by the eternal and inflexible principles of truth and justice.

In determining the question whether slavery be rightful or not, the process is not accomplished simply by answering the inquiry whether we would like to be a slave, any more than by saying whether we would like to be a slave-owner. The slave's dislike of his position no more proves slavery to be wrong, than the opposite feeling of the master proves it to be right. The only true standard is the will of God as he has revealed it in the Scriptures. By them alone we must determine whether God is willing that some men should be slaves, and other men masters.

Again — although the aspirations of the slave may always be after freedom, it does not necessarily follow that these aspirations are conformable to the Word of God, or that we are bound to go all lengths to assist him to realize them. We constantly hear vociferated, liberty or death. If the sentiment conveyed by the words was known to antiquity, it assuredly was not recognized in the Christian Church. The teaching clearly and unequivocally there was — "Let every man abide

in the calling wherein he was called. Art thou called, being a servant, care not for it." And the injunction was so emphatically uttered, that the apostle deemed it necessary to add a qualification, lest the slave in his anxiety to obey it to the letter, should refuse to accept his freedom on any terms. "But if thou mayest be made free," said he, "use it rather." The apostle could only mean that the slave in acquiring his freedom, should avail himself of such means as are lawful and right. No honest man would resort to anything else. But it may be said, that to release a fellow creature from the accursed yoke of slavery, any means are lawful and right. All abolitionists who acknowledge Dr. Channing as a leader, are estopped from taking advantage of this reply by their own act. He and his followers affirm, that Paul was deterred from proclaiming the utter repugnance which exists between christianity and slavery, by the apprehension that such a declaration would lead to a servile war; and arm the state against the church, on account of its hostility to the master. But if this permission can be construed as an authority to overthrow slavery by any and all means — then was Paul doing just what they say he was afraid to do. And he is made moreover to stultify himself by saying in one breath, that the slave should retain his position — envying nothing — regretting nothing — and in the next telling him to obtain his liberty at any cost.

The rule — "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets" — it is conceived may be rendered thus

Inasmuch as you desire that men should promptly and cheerfully discharge and perform, on their part, all those duties towards you, the benefit of which, by any law, human or divine, you are entitled to receive at their hands. So, on your part, you should in like manner render to them all those matters and things, which, by the same laws, they are authorized to demand and receive of you.

By the other construction the ultra abolitionist, the out-and-outer, who goes for immediate and unconditional emancipation appeals to his feelings as the arbiter of right and wrong. He should he theoretically acknowledge the law of God as revealed

in the Bible to possess authority superior to his extemporaneous impulses, that law must be expounded so as to quadrate with these dictates. In this pursuit he follows his instincts, though they were given for a very different purpose. He arrives at his conclusions through his sympathies. The process of ratiocination he finds slow and laborious, and its results often doubtful. He prefers a companion whose society is more agreeable, if not so safe. He is like the mariner, who, taking the winds for a guide, commits himself to their direction. Because the log shows a rapid headway, he counts on making a quick passage. But at length he finds to his cost that the breeze he deemed so propitious has only blowed him from his track. What was once comparatively easy of attainment, has now become most difficult. To reach his destination, all the resources of his profession must be called into action. He must get his observations, watch the compass, and consult the lead. It is only by these means that the skilful navigator insures success.

The only remaining source to which we can look for information is the writings of the inspired apostles. When they wrote their minds had been divinely illuminated to understand the Scriptures; and their memories, in like manner, had been refreshed, to enable them to recollect whatever Jesus had spoken. It was not possible for slavery to elude their observation, for the heathen world was full of it; and they numbered among their converts both masters and slaves. Both were looking to them for instructions how to behave, and the subject was of too much importance to be passed over in silence. Accordingly the apostles said all that was necessary to satisfy the most inquisitive mind, and relieve the most scrupulous conscience.

I. Both Peter and Paul have made allusions to the subject in several Epistles. 1 Peter ii. 18. "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear: not only to the good and gentle, but also the froward." And Paul advances the same sentiment. Colos. iii. 22. "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye have also a master in heaven." Eph. vi. 5. "Servants, be obedient unto

them that are your masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart as unto Christ; not with eye-service as men-pleasers; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men. And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening, knowing that your master is also in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him." 1 Cor. vii. 20. "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he is called. Art thou called being a servant, care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather." The Epistles, which were addressed as well to believing masters as believing slaves, and intended to regulate both faith and practice, contain not a single sentence in which manumission is enjoined upon the master as a duty, or in which freedom is held out to the slave as a right. Nowhere is permission given to the slave to abscond, much less to steal things to aid him in his flight. Such refinements in morals were reserved for modern casuists. The whole scope of apostolical teaching on the subject of slavery is just what a humane, considerate person can approve who looks upon the connection as indissoluble, and desires it shall be made as pleasant and profitable to both parties as the nature of it will admit.

II. Paul has left on record several schedules of the most odious and flagrant sins commonly practised in his day; among which slavery is nowhere included. But had slavery been prohibited directly or indirectly in the Old Testament, or had it been condemned by Jesus Christ in the whole course of his ministry, the practice of it by the early Christians was a gross sin, and must have been known to be such by all the apostles, and doubtless by the whole church. Under these circumstances the omissions so frequently repeated to class slavery with other abuses must have looked like a fraudulent attempt to conceal its nature and effects, and could not fail to arouse in the contemporaries of Paul the greatest indignation. It is an inconsistency that would have been particularly noticeable in Judea, where slavery was probably but little practised, and where a great company of the priests, whose habits and education rendered them familiar with the whole circle of the Old Testament, had

become obedient to the faith, and who were not likely to be blinded by self-interest to the errors of Paul in this particular. But in the early councils, which were held to settle points of discipline, and determine questions about the observance of the Mosaic law, the subject of slavery was nowhere mooted. And the early Christians, who frequently consulted the apostles, to know whether certain things were right or wrong, never spoke of slavery; nor do they seem to have entertained a doubt upon the matter. The whole array of abolitionists may be challenged to specify another practice which they admit to be sinful, that was openly and notoriously committed by Christians of that day, for which they were not severely reprehended.

III. Paul once sent a fugitive slave home to his master with a letter filled with instructions how he should be received and treated; and, among other things, he besought the master, in the most courteous, but in the most urgent and pressing terms, to set him free. Philemon was a slave-owner, who had been converted to Christianity, under the ministry of Paul. So important a feature in his religious and domestic life as slavery, could neither have been disguised or concealed; and, from the intimacy which existed between him and Paul, we cannot suppose that the subject was banished from their discourse. Certainly it was not, if Paul considered the practice sinful. Philemon thus enjoyed abundant opportunity of learning his duty towards his slaves, and the influence which Christianity was destined to exert in their behalf. Onesimus was also a convert of Paul's, and must have had sufficient intelligence to know what Christianity had done for his outward condition. Both parties perfectly well understood their respective positions. If slavery be inconsistent with Christianity, Onesimus was no longer a slave; a fact equally well known to Philemon and himself. On the supposition that Onesimus was free, we can see no occasion for that portion of the letter which relates to emancipation. It was only calculated to perplex and confuse both Philemon and Onesimus.

Until recently, it was not doubted, that Onesimus, when Paul sent him back, was a slave. But Dr. Barnes has attempted to give a new aspect to the incident in the life of One-

simus. He denies that Onesimus was at this time a slave, or that Paul influenced him to return. His efforts in behalf of these assumptions, are equivalent to an admission, that, should he fail to establish his points, all the inferences which slave-owners have drawn from the epistle to Philemon, are correct. The ground they take, is, that an inspired Apostle used the moral power attached to his exalted position, to induce a slave, who had escaped from his master, to return and submit himself again to the master's authority. Thence they infer, that slavery cannot be inherently and essentially wrong. If so, then was the Apostle accessory to the wrong, and partaker of the guilt. Dr. Barnes says, that it is not proved either that Onesimus was then a slave, or that Paul induced him to return. But if there be evidence that a personage, in point of holiness, standing far above even an inspired Apostle, once induced a fugitive slave to return to bondage, it sustains all the inferences which have been drawn from the conduct of Paul. Now, this is the very case of Hagar, the bond-maid of Abraham's wife. It is unnecessary to relate the whole transaction, which is recorded in 16th of Genesis. Owing to domestic troubles, Hagar ran away, and the angel of the Lord met her in the wilderness. In reply to his inquiries, how she came there, and where she was going, she told him that she had fled from her mistress, Sarai. "And the angel of the Lord said unto her, *Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.*" If it be said, that this was done because Hagar was the wife of Abraham, the answer admits the lawfulness of polygamy, and is, moreover, inconsistent with the words of the angel, who charged her to return to her mistress, and not to her husband or master. And whatever may have been the social position of Onesimus, that of Hagar is settled beyond dispute; for we are told by the apostle, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, who was Hagar, and the other by a free woman.

IV. The manner in which Paul has incidentally alluded to slavery, is plainly indicative of the light in which he viewed the subject. "What," he exclaims; "know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? *For ye are bought*

with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body and spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. vi. 19. The phraseology bears the most indubitable stamp of its paternity. It was coined in the slave-market, whence it passed into general circulation, and was incorporated into the current language of the day. But had the custom, which this familiar use of it could not fail most vividly to suggest, been regarded as a great atrocity, and indignantly condemned by the whole body of the church, it would not have been selected on this occasion as the form of expression, above all others the most appropriate to indicate the connection between Christ and his church; a relation the purest and holiest that can exist; so intimate indeed, that those composing it are said to be very members of his body. The apostle, indeed, institutes a comparison between the Christian course and a contest in the games; but in those trials of strength and skill, there was nothing necessarily and intrinsically wrong, and what he says about its being a warfare, is not introduced by way of illustration, but stated as a positive fact. The conflict is not represented as carnal, but as spiritual; and the arms which he describes, as well offensive as defensive, are calculated for that service.

V.

"Would I describe a preacher such as Paul,
Were he on earth, would hear, approve and own,
Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
His master strokes, and draw from his design."

The preacher would find this no difficult task so far as slavery is concerned. Paul, as we have seen, was not silent upon the subject, nor blind to its existence. Among other things, he gave directions to two Christian ministers as to what they should teach and preach in general; and what to slaves in particular. He tells one, and through him to all others, to "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and please them well in all things; not answering again, not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God their Savior in all things." Titus ii. 9. And again, "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not

blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather do them service because they are faithful and beloved partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort." 1 Tim. vi. After the most careful and attentive perusal of these passages it will be difficult to educe from them the formulary of modern anti-slavery. It has been said that slavery, though frequently the theme of Paul's remarks, is nowhere condemned by him. He was a bold, fearless man, and was never accused of concealing his opinions. If he was an abolitionist, he was widely different from the out-and-outers of our day. One of these, writing to the churches and christians of South Carolina, and warning them against the prevailing sins of the times, who should leave slavery out of the list; or when he came to mention slavery expressly, and the duty of masters in particular, should fail even to hint at emancipation; or who did not in fact heap upon the system every opprobrious epithet in the vocabulary, would be denounced by every man of his party as recreant to the faith, and held up as a white-livered sycophant to the scorn of the world.

In the opinion of some persons, slaves are required to render obedience to their masters on the ground that all men are commanded to be passive under injuries, and not to return evil for evil; and on that ground alone. But Paul has assigned a different cause. His words have been quoted already: "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed; and they that have believing masters let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved partakers of the benefit."

The directions to masters and servants have all along been stumbling-blocks in the way of anti-slavery writers; and a good deal of labor, and not a little ingenuity has been employed to remove them. Dr. Channing, whose fervid eloquence never sparkles more brilliantly than when employed on the subject of slavery, accounts for them thus: "Slavery," says he, "in the age of the Apostle, had so penetrated society, and was so inti-

mately interwoven with it; and the materials for a servile war were so abundant, that a religion preaching freedom to its victims would have shaken the social fabric to its foundations, and armed against itself the whole power of the state. Paul of consequence did not assail it. He satisfied himself with spreading principles, which however slowly, could not but work its destruction. He commanded Philemon to receive his fugitive slave, Onesimus, not as a slave, but above a slave, as a brother beloved; and he commanded masters to give to their slaves that which was just and equal; and how, in his circumstances, he could have done more for the subversion of slavery, I do not see."

It is equally difficult to be perceived how Dr. Channing could draw his conclusion from his premises. It certainly required a warm imagination to infer, that Paul meant to abolish slavery because he sought the liberation of one slave. The thing has been repeatedly done by men who were most strenuous to uphold the institution. And there is as little cause to suppose he meant to subvert it, when he commanded masters to treat their slaves with justice and humanity. It is no more than Moses had done before him. Let it be observed that all these directions go to teach masters how they should behave themselves in this relationship; and not how it should be abolished. The admonitions, if strictly observed, are much better calculated to perpetuate slavery, than to destroy it.

But we have always looked upon St. Paul as a man of profound wisdom, adapting with consummate skill his means to his ends. If, however, the Doctor's hypothesis be true, he was bereft in this instance of his usual tact and forecast. According to this theory, the Apostle feared that the permanence of the social fabric and the spread of the Christian religion would both be endangered by a declaration in plain language, expressing the sinfulness of slavery, and his detestation of the practice; and that he was willing to tolerate its existence for a while in preference to running this great risk, contenting himself with the thought that he had infused into his writings, certain principles that must ultimately work its destruction. He saw no way whereby its progress could suddenly be arrested

without sacrificing those great interests which it was his object to promote. He did not intend therefore to have it so suppressed. It could only be overthrown silently and imperceptibly except by the introduction of a greater evil than slavery itself. On this account, according to Dr. Channing, the method of attaining the proposed end, was as much part and parcel of the Apostle's plan, as the consummation of the event itself. For the reasons assigned, it was to be done quietly or not at all. "A religion preaching freedom to its victims would have shaken the social fabric to its foundations. Of consequence Paul did not assail it."

Unfortunately for Dr. Channing, the plan which he says the Apostle pursued is calculated to produce just the effects, against which he says the Apostle was so solicitous to guard. He says that Paul for sufficient reasons did not assail slavery, meaning openly and directly. Paul disseminated principles inimical to its existence. Dr. Channing would conclude that Paul pursued this course only by imagining that he found those principles in Paul's writings; for there is no tradition on the subject. If there are principles now in the Scriptures, showing that slavery is wrong, they were there in the days of Paul; and these Scriptures were as accessible to men of that day as they are to us; to the slave equally with the master; and many of the slaves were abundantly able to understand and appreciate them in all their proportions. For according to Dr. Channing, again slavery in the age of Paul, "was not so much of the black, as of the white man, not so much of barbarians, as of the Greeks; not merely of the ignorant and debased, but of the virtuous, educated and refined." The men who first preached Christianity, probably made themselves understood, for they are said to have turned the world upside down. Now, nothing is more natural to suppose than that the slaves of that period should scan the vital principles of the new religion with the keenest solicitude to detect, if possible, some element calculated to meliorate their unhappy condition; and would watch with the closest attention all that the preachers and writers should say on the subject. How then could Paul suppose for a moment that his sentiments, which he had committed to writing in his

epistles, and had uttered in his sermons, and exhortations, should remain concealed from the slave, whose faculties were now excited by the extraordinary stimulus? If they could not be concealed, it remains for the adherents of Dr. Channing to show in what the difference consists, so far as the spread of religion, and the well-being of society is concerned, between assailing slavery with the tone and gesture of a modern abolitionist, and taking the course secretly to undermine it, which they say the Apostle adopted. According to them, all that prevented the outbreak of a servile war, and restrained the slave from resorting to the greatest excesses to assert his freedom, was the doubt and uncertainty that hung over the question of emancipation. But they admit that all the elements were at hand for solving it. Paul had spread them. Whether that doubt were removed by a single word of inspiration, which should forbid slavery once, or was the fruit of mental induction slowly and laboriously elaborated from principles that had previously been proclaimed, the result would be the same. No man could have known this better than Paul. The supposition, that he expressed himself equivocally or enigmatically, with the deliberate purpose that his writings should be understood by the master in one sense, and by the slave in another; or that his words should bear different significations at different times, is so completely the antipodes of every idea we have formed of Paul, so degrading to his high and lofty intellect, so debasing to his pure and spotless morality, so unlike the dauntless courage which distinguished him on all occasions that we turn from it with disgust.

Dr. Channing holds in light esteem all who attempt to defend slavery on the authority of Revelation. After citing some of the arguments on which slave-holders have been wont to rely; he says, "This reasoning proves too much. If usages sanctioned in the Old Testament, and not forbidden in the New, are right, then will our moral code undergo a sad deterioration. Polygamy was allowed to the Israelites, was practised by the holiest men, and was common and licensed in the age of the Apostles. But the Apostles nowhere condemn it, nor was a renunciation of it made an essential condition of

admission into the Christian church. Why may not Scripture be used to stock our houses with wives as well as slaves?"

'The glow of benevolence which Dr. Channing habitually felt towards suffering humanity in every condition, and particularly towards the slave, made him overlook a broad and well-defined distinction between polygamy and slavery; and hurried him on to conclusions which his cooler judgment could not have approved. We have already seen when slavery was established, and why. But the origin of polygamy no man knows. Divorce was allowed to the Jews for the hardness of their hearts, and it would be strange if polygamy stands on any better foundation. Arguments drawn from the physical, social and moral constitution of man, may be fairly used to combat it. If these are not enough, the seal of reprobation has been set upon it by one who had competent authority. The question is forever put to rest by the new law of divorce, promulgated by Jesus Christ. "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery." Matt. xix. 9. It has been shown repeatedly that marrying another, is what constitutes the crime of adultery, and not the putting away! so that he who marries without first putting away, is equally guilty. Dr. Channing, writing *currente calamo*, overlooked this important alteration in the law of divorce. Besides it is by no means certain that his assertion is correct that polygamy was practised extensively in the days of the Apostles in the countries where they labored. The custom was not allowed by the laws of Greece or Rome, and no allusion is made in the New Testament to its existence in Judea. It had there become nearly or quite extinct. Although a renunciation of it is nowhere specifically made a condition of admission to the Christian church, there is no evidence in the New Testament that a polygamist ever was admitted. He was an adulterer. Adulterers were not admitted, though slave-owners were.

"Let me offer another remark," says Dr. Channing. "The perversion of Scripture to the support of slavery, is singularly inexcusable in this country. Paul not only commanded slaves

to obey their masters ; he delivered the precept : Let every soul be subject to the higher powers ; for there is no power but of God. Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. This passage was written in the time of Nero. It teaches passive obedience more strongly than any text teaches the lawfulness of slavery. Accordingly, it has been quoted in all ages, and made the strong-hold of tyranny. Did our fathers acquiesce in the most obvious interpretation of the text ? Because the first Christians were taught to obey despotic rule, did our fathers feel as if Christianity had stripped men of their rights ? Did they argue that absolute power ceases to be unjust, because, as a general rule, it is the duty of subjects to obey ? Did they infer, that bad institutions are to be perpetuated, because the subversion of them by force will always inflict a greater evil than it removes ? No : they were wiser interpreters of God's Word."

With the highest admiration of Dr. Channing's intellect, and profoundly impressed with the purity of his motives, we are, nevertheless, constrained to say, that this language savors more of an inflammatory harangue before an anti-slavery assemblage, than a solemn argument in favor of emancipation. He admits, without reserve, that the patriots of the revolution, by their resistance to British usurpation, violated the plainest instructions given in Scripture to regulate the conduct of the early Christians towards the civil authority, and he leaves it to be inferred, without a single qualification, that the negro, in pursuit of freedom, would be justified in treating with no greater respect the rules laid down in the same Scriptures to regulate the connection between master and slave. *Vox populi, vox Dei* is unhesitatingly admitted, and becomes the controlling element. Bunker Hill is elevated to an equality with Mount Sinai. The declaration of independence is acknowledged as the rule of faith and practice.

But if Dr. Channing chooses to adopt *vox populi* as the touchstone of slavery, so be it. We agree. He calls upon our fathers of the revolution. We invoke our illustrious grandfathers and great-grandfathers, the puritans.

Those who so vehemently affirm that the sinfulness of slavery

is plainly and clearly disclosed in the Bible, are bound to explain, why all Christendom, with the Bible in their hands, remained until recently in such profound ignorance of the fact. True, the church of Rome disallowed the practice of enslaving those of its own faith; and there it stopped. The tenderness was not extended to infidels. They were regarded as lawful subjects of slavery. It admitted the principle, only limiting its operation. Now, granting that the church of Rome was as ignorant and corrupt as its bitterest opponents pretend, very different in all these respects was the condition of the Puritans. No such charges lie against them; and when they saw their duty, no men walked up more valiantly to its requirements. And yet they had slaves; the Indian first, and afterwards the negro. Although many notions held by the Puritans have now become unfashionable, and some of their peculiarities excite ridicule, no one doubts the uprightness of their intentions, or the purity of their motives. The question, therefore, instantly arises, how men, learned and honest as they unquestionably were, quitting their country and all that men hold dear for a howling wilderness, perfectly content, so they might worship God agreeably to the dictates of their own conscience; accustomed to make the Levitical law the theme of daily conversation, and to a great extent, the rule of their actions, should mistake very widely, or for a great length of time, its bearings on the subject of slavery; a matter so clear and simple in the estimation of many in these latter days, as not to admit of an argument. What was *vox populi* in New England a century ago? Before abolitionists make broad their phylacteries and deck themselves in the robes of infallibility, to pronounce, *ex cathedra*, that slavery is a deadly sin, let them show what new light has broke in to establish their claim to this proud distinction. Down to the American revolution, let them show how extensively in their own favorite land their idea was known and admitted. They are summoned to point out what new luminary has dispelled the dark and portentous clouds that hung in such massive folds over the subject. Was it the Bible? The divine effulgence from that volume had been glowing for centuries, certainly from the reformation; and its beams diffused far and wide, shed a more benignant lustre

upon no part of the world, than upon this western wilderness. Who hesitated to pronounce murder, and arson and idolatry, crimes of the first magnitude? And yet, every body knows that slavery was not abolished in the cradle of liberty, puritanical Massachusetts, on account of any religious scruples. It made discordant music with the boasted charter of our liberties, the cherished bill of rights. Illegal taxation and writs of assistance had more to do in bringing about the measure, than the teachings of prophets and apostles. Until the excitement arising out of those measures, severed the connection with the mother country, there was no difference of opinion on the subject of slavery, between the North and the South.

But to show how little value should be attached to the opinions of the Puritans, we shall be told, with immense satisfaction, that the old fanatics and their immediate descendants, who held such doctrines about slavery, believed also in witches, and hung innocent men and women, under the absurd pretence that they held intercourse with the devil. Be it so; yet it will not be denied that witchcraft is a crime specified in the Bible; and the whole world may be challenged to prove, by the Bible, that it does not exist in full force and activity at the present moment. It will be admitted that the devil once exercised this power over mankind. Let those who sneer at the idea that such is not the case now, show from the Bible that his power has been diminished, or that his malignancy is abated. The text is yet to be found. On Scriptural grounds, therefore, the Puritans were guilty of no absurdity in making laws against witches.

They may have erred in their diagnostics of the crime, or the witnesses to prove it may have been mistaken, or they may have been perjured. We are not required to defend their demonology, or palliate their judicial proceedings. But they learnt from the Bible that witchcraft was forbidden, and they made it felony. They found that slavery was allowed, and they permitted it. Admitting that they erred on the score of witchcraft, owing to their imperfect knowledge of diabolism, it does not follow that they were equally ignorant of slavery. That had been long enough at work among them, and was sufficiently diffused to render them familiar with all its essential qualities.

Because great advances have recently been made in the cause of temperance, and in the knowledge of the true principles on which it proceeds, it is argued, with some plausibility, that similar improvements have been made in other departments connected with human happiness, and in that of slavery among the rest. Such an opinion is based on the assumption that our ancestors were no better acquainted with the general bearings of slavery, than they were with the properties of alcohol. But is it so? All the great Scripture truths bearing upon slavery were open to our ancestors as they are to us. Nothing, since their day, has been added; nothing subtracted. They admit neither of increase nor diminution. But with regard to the nature and effects of alcohol the case is entirely different. The art of obtaining that substance by distillation was discovered long after the canon of Scripture was closed. Of course, Scripture is silent on the subject. In the absence of all information from this quarter, mankind, misled by a very natural fallacy, formed a most erroneous opinion as to its qualities, and for a long time cherished a serpent instead of a benefactor. It was only after a series of most painful experiments that the truth was fairly developed, and public sentiment became thoroughly enlightened. But at the time when slavery was practised at the north by universal consent, the experiments with ardent spirits had not been long enough continued for observers to foretell the results. They were recommended by men of all classes, and far from being classed with luxuries, they were reckoned among the commonest necessities of life. Entirely different is the estimation in which they are held now. But had the pernicious and deadly properties been clearly revealed in Scripture, those who made it their daily study could not have fallen into this vast error. Our ancestors may, therefore, be good expounders of the Bible in relation to slavery, though bad examples on the subject of temperance.

It is related of Clarkson, that, having a college exercise to write on the slave-trade, he took prodigious pains to make himself master of the subject, both by procuring books and by seeing persons who had been in Africa. The information he obtained so affected him that he devoted his life to the suppression of the traffic. But he was not impelled to this measure by anything

he found in the Bible condemning slavery. His resolution sprung from a different course. It was the horrors of the middle passage and other enormities that inspired him with resolution to perform his labors.

It is not here pretended that slavery is right because it is tolerated in the New Testament; because Christ and his apostles, finding it in existence, did not forbid it, or require its suppression. Its validity rests upon another ground. It was right before the New Testament was written; and it continues to be right because it is not therein abrogated.

We now come to the inquiry whether slavery was designed to be perpetual or temporary.

At its commencement nothing was said about its termination, nor any limit set to its existence. The law which was violated has its seat in the inmost recesses of our nature. Honor thy father and thy mother is a precept which will be binding while the relation of parent and child shall endure. It was for a violation of that law under the most revolting circumstances that slavery was instituted. The sentence was pronounced by one having competent authority; and it has never been revoked. The lesson it inculcates can never become obsolete. No change has taken place in the moral constitution of man, that will justify the removal of the least restraint upon vice, nor the suppression of a single incentive to virtue.

“Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.”

From the terms of the malediction, it is apparent that Noah did not intend to restrict the consequences of the curse to the parties immediately concerned on either side, but designed that their posterity should be effected by them.

A portion of the blessings which were promised to Shem and Japheth have, most manifestly, been conferred on their children, and the opinion is here submitted, that the prediction, far from being fulfilled, is in the act of being accomplished at the present moment, and under our own eyes.

God did, in a most emphatic manner, bless Shem. He received as his inheritance the fairest quarter of the globe, and it still remains in the possession of his posterity. It was his race who were embraced in the first church constituted upon earth; and from him descended the Saviour of the world.

Of the prophecy respecting Japheth a part of it has been developed in a manner equally significant; and events now in progress leave no reasonable doubt of their end and aim. It was declared to Japheth that he should be enlarged. This has been brought about in a manner that exactly tallies with this prediction. To say nothing of Greek or Roman conquests, it was a descendant of Japheth who first made this western continent extensively known to his brethren of the other hemisphere; and the continent has been added to his original patrimony. His posterity now control it with hardly an exception, and present appearances indicate, in a manner too clearly to be mistaken, that they are destined to be the sole occupants. They have possession of New Holland, another continent, and hold in their grasp the remotest islands of the sea. With the acquisition of these extensive and valuable territories they have gone on multiplying in a corresponding ratio. And how clearly is the other moiety of the prophecy in the process of fulfilment! Japheth dwells already in the tents of Shem. India, Persia, China, can testify to the fact. Russia stretches her gigantic limbs along the frozen ocean on the north of Asia to an indefinite extent. The millions of India acknowledge as their rightful sovereign a personage born on the opposite side of the globe and a stranger to their race; while China is reluctantly opening her portals to those whom she has always treated with the greatest contumely, and despised as barbarians and inferiors. With these facts staring us in the face, is it showing a decent respect to revelation, is it philosophical, to say that the other portion of the charter which gave the sons of Japheth dominion over the children of Canaan is a dead letter? When the highly-favored race of Shem rise up to give them place, shall Canaan, with the curse burning on his brow, refuse to do reverence? The reward of Shem and Japheth and their posterity is inseparably connected with the punishment of Canaan and his posterity; and the whole forms

a continuous chain. In slavery there are of necessity two parties — master and slave. While Shem and Japheth are entitled to slaves, Canaan must submit his neck to the yoke.

We know that slavery commenced by divine permission; chapter and verse attest it. The decree has never been revoked. The next inquiry, therefore, is whether the posterity of Canaan yet exist as a separate and distinct people, so as to be distinguished from all other branches of the human family.

In the supposition itself there is nothing improbable. Why should they not? The curse pronounced upon them lays no restriction upon the command to increase and multiply and replenish the earth. The descendants of Ishmael have continued to obey its impulse retaining many of the peculiarities which distinguished their ancestor. In like manner, we find the Jews possessing many original traits of character. There is nothing absurd, therefore, in expecting that we may be equally successful in finding the descendants of Canaan.

We learn from the Bible that Canaan had a numerous family of sons, some of whom settled in Palestine, and increased and became in process of time seven nations. With the destiny of the others we are not so well acquainted, as it had no immediate connection with the history of the Israelites; but, considering the peculiar condition of the race of man, and the situation of the world at that early date, there can be no reasonable doubt of their having left descendants.

In starting upon the enterprise to discover the lineage of Canaan, unless we would abandon on the outset the only chance of success, we should call to mind the circumstances in which it was placed, and in which it will be found. 1. It was cursed, and that curse never having been removed, still clings to it. 2. When brought to light, it will be found plunged in the depths of degradation, the lowest in which humanity can exist, and retain a semblance of its original. 3. It will be enslaved by the posterity of Shem and Japheth. 4. Its members will enslave one another. All these particulars are comprised in the body of the curse.

In the grand division of the earth among the sons of Noah, Africa, according to all accounts, was assigned to Ham. In

due time, his posterity took possession of their patrimony. When we consider, that all who sprung from Canaan were liable to servitude, and as much so to their brethren, the posterity of Ham, as to the others, we can see no cause to doubt that many of them accompanied the first colonists into Egypt, in the capacity of slaves. A taste for slavery would be readily acquired where the right existed, and the materials were in readiness. Those who settled in Palestine, being a part only of the sons, obeyed an impulse, the nature and origin of which they were profoundly ignorant; although subsequent events have made them obvious enough to us. God sent them out as pioneers, in the settlement of that country, and made them perform all the labors, and endure all the hardships incident to subduing it, and rendering it habitable, and converting it into a desirable place of residence: so that when the time arrived for the real proprietors of the soil to take possession, under a title derived directly from the fountain head, they found it completely fitted and prepared for their reception. Cities were founded, houses built, fields cultivated, gardens planted, and all done without having given them the least trouble or toil. Deut. vi. 10; Ps. cv. 42; Neh. ix. 25. The Canaanites, having performed all this drudgery, agreeably to divine appointment, were expelled by the victorious arms of Joshua. Many of them fled to Africa, the country of their birth-right. In this way, Africa received a large accession of inhabitants. But ages before that event, Africa was peopled, and had attained to great opulence and a high degree of civilization, and was the great slave-market of the world. In the time of Joseph, the practice was thoroughly understood and systematically practised. Egypt was full of slaves in times beyond the records of history. The pyramids, and other works of art, attest the fact. Such monuments of folly and pride were never executed by laborers who were paid. The constituent properties of human nature have not changed. Slavery was then as bitter as it is now, and probably more so. As a rule, slaves would embrace every opportunity to escape; and, among such multitudes, many would succeed in the attempt. The instinct of self-preservation would prompt them to seek out the most inaccessible positions as places

of refuge, where they might remain unmolested ; and, under a broiling sun, surrounded by a pestilential atmosphere, in the deserts and morasses of that most unwholesome continent, they found them.

Africa, the meanest quarter of the globe, having been equitably assigned to Ham, on account of his vileness, we may infer that the worst part of Africa would fall, as a matter of course, to Canaan, the worst member of so bad a family. In Africa, therefore, we commence our researches. Impressed with the idea that the object of our pursuit will be found in the most abject condition, we turn to the worst part of it. Looking in that direction, we discover the negro. He has been the sole tenant of the territory, from time immemorial. But it is not his by force of arms, for he is feeble ; nor by superior intelligence, for he is simple ; nor yet by the generosity or forbearance of his neighbors. They never neglected a chance to rob and enslave him. But he holds it under the protection of an invisible arm, that has hitherto baffled all attempts to expel him. The guardian angel of that country is the angel of death. The pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction of noon-day, have been stalking about it for thousands of years, repelling the assaults of every invader. The herald of the cross, the pilgrim of science, the devotee of mammon, have all fallen on the threshold of that dark and mysterious land. Attempts to explore it, even when pushed by all the efforts of civilized man, have proved unavailing. The greater part is yet a sealed book, and much that is seen is little understood. The negro has thus been preserved from the fate that has attended the American Indian, who has steadily receded before the footsteps of the white man. Nothing else could have preserved Africa from that insatiable lust of dominion that has ever characterized the European — that descendant of Japheth, who was told in the beginning that he should be enlarged.

The causes which have secured the country of the negro from encroachments, have also preserved his individuality. In Africa his blood is less adulterated by foreign admixture than that of any other portion of mankind. As he was in the days of the Pharaohs, so he is now. Among the paintings which yet

survive to proclaim the glories of Egypt as it probably existed before the days of Abraham, and which still retain their freshness among the ruins of antiquity, the negro is conspicuous; exhibiting the peculiarities which distinguish him at the present day — the same color, the same physiognomy, and the same love of finery. While men, who are portrayed with Caucasian features, are clad in what would now be thought a becoming costume, the negro is fantastically arrayed in the most gaudy and flaunting colors, with rings in his nose, and displaying other habiliments of barbarism. And what corroborates, in a singular manner, the view here taken, is, that he is exhibited in the same relative position that he has ever sustained, — in battle-scenes he is a captive, and in domesticity a menial.

However much we may differ in opinion respecting the mental powers of the negro, it is universally acknowledged that there is a wide difference between his physical structure and that of other branches of the human family. A fact so notorious could not escape the attention of philosophers, and accordingly two theories have been offered for its solution. The opposite parties assail each other with such cogency of reasoning, that we are compelled to withhold our assent equally from both.

One side contends that the discrepancy, great as it is, may be rationally accounted for by natural causes; the most efficient of which are the influence of climate and the peculiarities of living, exerted through an indefinitely long space of time. In support of this position they urge the great dissimilarity that exists in some species of domestic animals; for example, the hog. According to them, the wild boar was the original source whence all the different forms and varieties have sprung, — displaying at this time as great a diversity in color, shape and constitution as can be found in the human race. Of hogs, some kinds are black, some white, and others tawny. One sort is distinguished by large bones, and another by small; and in fact we find as great a diversity in their osteology, color and habits, as we find in mankind. All this, say philosophers, may be traced to climate and feeding, and the incidents which grow out of them.

Climate, food, temperature, and other physical causes, are

capable of effecting great and important changes as well internally as externally, in all animal existence; how great it is impossible to say. But they who believe that another theory is required to account for the difference between the white man and the black, may safely admit all that is claimed for this in accounting for the changes which have taken place in regard to the inferior animals. In this concession, however, the qualification originally introduced must be kept constantly in mind; that the changes in these animals have required an indefinitely long period of time for their development. Here is the point where the analogy between the transformation which has taken place in brutes and men fails. After the animals had dispersed from the ark, there is no monument to which we can refer, showing how soon a change took place in any species so as to assume the character of a new variety. It is not proved how long it took the progeny of the wild boar to require an appearance different from the archetype and one that could be transmitted by lineal descent. An indefinite period is claimed for its accomplishment. But it appears that, within comparatively a few years of the flood, both the negro and the Caucasian existed, bearing all the external marks that now distinguish them. When as much can be said of other animals, there will then be some ground to conclude that the difference perceptible in them proceeded from the same cause as that which distinguishes the human race. But it cannot be shown that a breed of swine — the Berkshire, for example, or any new variety — existed at that time, or that a sufficient period had elapsed after the dispersion, to produce one by natural causes. Until a difference in the structure of brutes of the same species can be traced back as far as the difference in men, and equally marked in both cases, all this reasoning from analogy fails. At least, its advocates are bound to explain how the negro was produced in that limited period of time, and how his progress was then arrested so that he became stereotyped, and has never changed since. Who ever heard that a negro had been changed by food or climate back again to a white man, or had made any approaches towards it? The inhabitants of tropical latitudes, who claim to be descended from European parentage, exhibit no ten-

dency to the negro conformation, although they have been exposed to the climate as long as the time that elapsed between the flood and the age of Abraham. All that can be said with certainty is, that the natives of hot countries are marked by a darker hue than those born further from the equator; but it has never been pretended that climate has changed the structure of their bones, or converted their hair into wool. If climate be the cause of the negro variety, it remains to be seen why Asiatics, under a sun as fervid as that of Africa, do not present flattened noses, and curly heads, and long heels, like the negro. They never have assumed this appearance, and, from the length of time that has elapsed, we believe they never will.

It may be thought that the agreement between Jacob and Laban for wages is inconsistent with this statement. Even at that early day Laban's sheep were not all of a color, nor were his goats. But to account for this, it should be remembered that clean beasts, of which sheep and goats are varieties, went into the ark by sevens. Those might have been party-colored. The time from the creation to the flood might have been sufficient to work the change. What took place afterwards for Jacob's advantage, was not owing to natural but to supernatural causes. It is clear that Laban, with all his skill in rural affairs, had no belief that cattle of an uniform color would produce party-colored offspring, or offspring of an uniform color different from their own; as if black parents should have a healthy white child. He was right in his belief, as Jacob himself admitted. Jacob said to his wives, "*Your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me.*" If he said thus, the speckled shall be thy wages: then all the cattle were speckled; or if he said thus, the ring-straked shall be thy hire, then bare all the cattle ring-straked. Thus hath God taken away the cattle of your father and hath given them to me." The expedient used by Jacob had nothing more to do with the effects that followed, than dipping seven times in Jordan had with curing the leprosy. The results in both cases were miraculous. They never followed such proceedings before or since.

These and like objections have appeared so formidable to some of the most eminent naturalists, that they have pronounced them to be insuperable. They declare that the difference between the Caucasian and the Negro can be accounted for on no known physiological principles. They have abandoned the attempt to explain it in conformity with those laws, and resort to the bold assumption that the two races never sprung from the same common ancestor. The difference they say is specific, and that there was a negro Adam. This is taking the bull by the horns. It cuts the knot, but the same stroke severs our hold on revelation. It is downright infidelity. If it were a subject to be treated with levity, we might exhort theologians to inquire whether the black Adam transgressed as the red Adam did. They should also resolve this difficulty. "As by *one man* sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Rom. v. 12. But for whose sin are we paying this tremendous penalty, the Asiatic or the African forefather? We are not informed particularly by revelation, and experience leads to no satisfactory conclusions. Black and white both die alike. Let the board of missions give the subject a most searching examination before they put in jeopardy any more valuable lives in the attempt to Christianize benighted Africa. After all, who knows whether a blackamoor has a soul, or if he have, whether he is in any need of salvation?

The difficulty of settling the genealogy of the negro on any satisfactory basis, appeared so great to Mr. Gliddon, to whom this country is so much indebted for a knowledge of Egypt and its antiquities, that he abandons the inquiry without offering even a conjecture. After showing most satisfactorily that the people who built the pyramids were not of negro, but of Caucasian mould, he stops. His declaration is:—"How the real African aborigines, the Berbers and the negroes, were disseminated over Ethiopia and Nigritia, is foreign to my discourse, nor do I presume to offer an hypothesis."

There is only one method left of solving the mystery, and although it may provoke the sneers of the skeptic, it is offered in the full persuasion that the devout believer will find nothing

in it inconsistent with his views of divine providence. It harmonizes with all the facts that have been adduced, and is sustained by analogy with the whole scope of revelation. It is this; the change which produced the negro was supernatural. God, for wise purposes, ordained that one portion of mankind should enslave another, and he set a mark upon the unfortunate party, by which he could always be recognized. It took from the negro all chance of escape by denying his parentage, and conferred upon the white man the ability at all times to assert his privileges. The evidence was stamped in a manner that betokens its origin. It defies erasure or concealment. Such an occurrence is not without a parallel in the providence of God. He set a mark externally upon Cain by which he might be known; and when the people were in danger through pride of revolting from their allegiance, He confounded their language and scattered them. This hypothesis will account for all the peculiarities that distinguish the negro as no other will. It is in perfect keeping with the divine operations. It was necessary that the difference between the races should be seen and known at once. Without a miracle of some sort this could not be effected, and this change from the parent stock was the one best calculated to answer the purpose.

It may be said that there is a great diversity among the negro tribes—that they differ in some respects from each other, and it may be asked which are the true and legitimate descendants of Canaan. Doubtless all of them are. He had many sons, and unquestionably daughters too, who differed from each other like ordinary children; and they in turn, like all others, must have imparted slight peculiarities to their offspring, and so on in perpetuity. But an unmistakable family likeness runs through the whole variety.

Heaven seems to frown upon all attempts at amalgamation between the black and white races. The progeny of such an union, instead of being improved by the cross, as is frequently the case with the different varieties among inferior animals, invariably deteriorates. It lacks the intellectual vigor of the white and the warm affections of the black, while it introduces no element of sufficient value to compensate for the diminution

of either. Moreover, the mulatto is said to be short-lived, and speedily to run out, unless enforced by fresh supplies from the parent stocks.

Even could it be made to appear that the Canaanites of Palestine were not black, the hypothesis here set up is not affected by it. A peculiar destiny awaited that race. After subduing and planting the country, it was intended that they should be destroyed. Perpetual and hereditary slavery was reserved for the other branches of the family. This is agreeable to the other part of the visitation. Canaan alone, from the whole house of Ham, was singled out to bear the marks of the divine displeasure, and a part of his race again may have been selected on whom it should be perpetuated.

In his condition the negro has always been accursed. He has always been a savage of the lowest order. He has always been a slave, the very servant of servants. Slavery with him has been the rule, and freedom the exception; while with all others freedom has been the rule and slavery the exception. The negroes enslave each other, and Africa is full of slaves. He has been enslaved by the European and Asiatic through all past time, but neither have been enslaved by him. Whenever other races from time to time have been reduced to this abject condition, they have always found means sooner or later to extricate themselves. The negro, never. White slavery scarcely exists; black slavery is nearly universal. One race and one only was condemned to perpetual slavery. One and one only has been perpetually enslaved.

It is not however pretended that a custom merely, be it ever so ancient or widely spread, confers of itself a right to keep the negro in bondage. In theory, prescription cannot create a title or confer a right. In contemplation of law there was once a good title acquired in a legal manner to whatever is held or practised under the sanction of prescription; but at a period so remote that through time or accident the evidence to prove it is lost. Prescription is not adduced as ground or essence of title, but as evidence of title; and it is frequently the strongest evidence of things long passed that can be imagined. In matters resting merely in tradition or hearsay, unaccompanied by acts,

we can readily conceive that facts may be suppressed or falsehood introduced with hardly the possibility of detection. A variety of statements may be floating about sustained apparently on equally good authority. So with written evidence, documents may be forged or the true text corrupted so skilfully as to defy the closest scrutiny. But an universal custom, existing from time immemorial, known and practised of all men and in all places, cannot be falsified or mistaken. Such has been the case with regard to negro slavery.

Modern discoveries have made us acquainted with nearly the whole surface of our planet, and tolerably familiar with its inhabitants; and no people have been found, nor do accounts of any exist, having all the marks which we had a right to expect from the denunciation of Noah would be set upon the descendants of Canaan, but the negro. The negro has them all, and he has nothing else. With him the curse operates with irresistible sway, and is fulfilled to the letter. While other countries have been advancing in arts and sciences, and improving in government and civilization, the negro portion of Africa has ever exhibited the same revolting aspect. She has neither received those blessings from others nor achieved them for herself. That country continues to be, as it ever has been, the chosen habitation of wretchedness and cruelty. There sits the savage in his most degraded condition, and there is the cannibal, and there is the slave-hunter and the slave.

In looking attentively at the subject, we are forcibly impressed with the appearance of design, of adaptation of means to an end which is conspicuous throughout the whole of it. A skilful geographer, employed to designate a spot best calculated for an immense depot of slaves, from which the whole world could be most readily supplied with subjects, would have selected Africa. Its position is eminently calculated to afford an easy intercourse with all the other quarters of the globe. It is accessible on every side. It is contiguous to Europe and Asia, and more easily approached from that part of America where slaves can be most advantageously employed than any portion of the other hemisphere.

Its climate, perfectly adapted to the negro, is destructive

to every other human being. In order to qualify him to act his part in the best manner in an enferior condition, he was not endowed with an equal amount of energy and enterprise that was vouchsafed to the other races. Owing to this constitutional imbecility, he was not fitted to cope with them on equal terms, or defend himself against their rapacity. Had it not been for the protection afforded him by the insalubrity of the climate, his country would have been wrested from him long ago. The European would have appropriated it to his own use as he has America; and the negro would have become a matter of history.

The climate is not without its uses in other respects. It is so much worse than every other, that every change is an improvement. The negro bears transportation without injury. He requires no seasoning; and flourishes even in cold latitudes, if well cared for.

It will be seen, by the map, that of all the great divisions, Africa enjoys the highest degree of solar heat. In consequence of this, there is no part of the world where human life can be sustained on such easy terms. The equinoctial line makes a pretty fair division of it. There is no winter. Two crops of food can be gathered in many parts per annum. Clothing can be procured by the smallest amount of exertion; and the slightest degree of mechanical skill is enough to construct a dwelling. It is, therefore, admirably adapted for the residence of persons of the meanest capacity.

Animals which, from their nature, are most exposed to destruction, having little or no means of self-defence, possess in a proportionate degree the powers of reproduction. The fecundity of the negro is proverbial.

The absence of long navigable rivers, and the interruptions caused by deserts and mountains, have rendered social intercourse among the African nations extremely difficult. While they may have favored petty wars, they have prevented extensive conquests and the formation of great states and empires. With the exception of ancient Egypt, which was not founded by negroes, and so is not embraced in this discussion, there has been none such on the continent. The mercantile transactions of the negroes among themselves, are confined principally to

the simplest necessities of life. Their external commerce is limited in a great measure to the slave trade. These causes, combined with the natural feebleness intellectually of the negro, have kept him in a state of barbarism, and prevented him from rising above his destined condition.

It is not possible to imagine a combination of circumstances better calculated to produce the enslavement of the negro in the first instance, nor to promote the continuance of the practice, than what are here displayed. Philanthropists have not yet discovered the method to prevent it.

There are some who assert that the negro is intellectually equal to the white man. His apparent inferiority is owing, according to them, to the degradation in which he has most iniquitously been held. As a case in point, they bid us look at the Carthagenians. They assume that the Carthagenians were negroes. Hannibal they say was a negro. Now, it is well known, that Carthage was founded by the Phœnicians, and that the Phœnicians were descended from the Canaanites. Thus the Canaanites were negroes, and the negroes are the offspring of Canaan. Supposing that the Punic branch of Canaanites was intellectually equal to the Romans, it detracts nothing from our position. The inquiry is not about the mental capacity of the negro, but the stock from which he sprung.

That the negro is absolutely the descendant of Canaan, is a proposition which, from its very nature, is incapable of mathematical demonstration. The same may be said of all prophecy. The evidence to prove it is altogether of another nature, but not the less satisfactory, nor the less entitled to belief. In this case, we are compelled to embrace one of two opinions. The negro is the legitimate descendant of Canaan, and so liable to all the pains and penalties of the curse; or the whole race of Canaan, which was doomed to slavery, has become extinct—having, in a most mysterious and unaccountable manner, disappeared, no one knows when or wherefore, and another and a different people, but possessing all their characteristics, in a manner equally mysterious, have voluntarily intruded themselves into their place—have assumed all their repulsive traits, and, from a time beyond the reach of history, have submitted, and still do submit, to their ignominy and degradation.